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THE CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS UNITY

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THE CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS UNITY

BY

HERBERT KELLY

OF THE SOCIETY OF THE SACRED MISSION

ASSISTANT TUTOR OF THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF KELHAM
NEWARK-ON-TRENT

WITH A PREFACE

BY THE RIGHT REV.

THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER

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1913

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TO

MOTHER

BEST AND DEAREST,

WHO WAS PASSING FROM US WHILE I WROTE ON
UNITY, AND, BEFORE WE HAD REACHED TO
SPEAK OF FAITH IN GOD,
WENT HOME IN PEACE,
MAY 11TH, 1912.

UNA CUM ORATIONIBUS OMNIUM SANCTORUM
SUPER ALTARE QUI EST ANTE THRONUM DEI,
OREMUS, NOS QUOQUE, FRATRES MEI.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE BY THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER - ix

INTRODUCTION - - - - - - - - 1

PART I

THE RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCE

CHAPTER

I. PROPOSALS FOR REUNION - - - - - 21

II. THE CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE - - - - - 37

III. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH - - - - 52

IV. THE CHURCH SACRAMENTS - - - - - 66

V. THE HOLY COMMUNION. I. - - - - 74

VI. THE HOLY COMMUNION. II. - - - - 98

PART II

A SYNTHESIS OF PRINCIPLES

VII. FREEDOM - - - - - - - - - 131

VIII. THE HISTORIC EPISCOPATE - - - - 145

IX. THE RELATION OF PRINCIPLES - - - - 166

CHAPTER PAGE

X. The Two Principles of Ministry - - - 188

XI. Is a Synthesis Possible? - - - - 210

PART III

DOCTRINE

XII. Creeds and Faith - - - - - - 233

XIII. Creeds and Authority - - - - - 259

XIV. Anglicanism - - - - - - 293

PREFACE

Respect for the author himself, and for the valuable and originative work which he has done for the Church, made me promise to consider his suggestion that I should put some preface to his book. But I do so now from a genuine sense of the value of what he has written. It is a book, as seems to me, precisely of the kind which the time requires: it starts the right question: it is written to an extraordinary degree in the right temper: and it contributes suggestions of great pertinence and value towards the answer or answers to be given.

We have watched in the last few years a great change in men's thoughts about Christian Unity. Without hallucinations as to its practical attainment in our own or our children's time, we have ceased to regard it merely as an academical question or pious aspiration. It is recognised as one upon which thought and prayer must be focussed. The consideration of it may even increase our sense of its difficulty, may impress upon us the depth and range of the religious issues that it opens, may make us feel that only by some wonderful, and probably catastrophic, working of God can it ever really come to pass, and Roman Catholic and Quaker, the Holy Orthodox Church and Congregationalists be gathered with Anglicans into one truly Catholic unity of faith and life.

But the very fact of opening up such issues, of measuring such difficulties, if it be reverently and keenly done, will be itself rich with gain. It should give largeness to thought: it should break up and soften prejudice: it should make temper gentler and humbler: it should turn much of controversy into conference.

In such conference we of the Church of England shall be more and more obliged to face the question what it is for which we stand, what we have to contribute, what is the trust to which we must be devotedly faithful. We must consider it, not merely as it is considered in controversy when you make your points against your opponent: nor merely as it is considered in instruction, when you give to your own people justifying reasons which they are prepared to accept for what you profess and do. We must consider it, as it were, in the open: and with it the question, what we lack and need, what we have to learn and to receive, what others may have and may contribute.

It is from the Mission Field that we have received (as was felt solemnly and deeply at Edinburgh in 1910) the strongest impulse in this direction: and we hail it as a reward graciously given for faithfulness, however imperfect, to the Divine command of Evangelization.

It is this which makes me say that such a book as this is at least exactly of the right sort and goes straight to the heart of our Christian question. But I should say more, and a good deal more. The author surely guides us with true instinct to the centre of the matter. The reality of Jesus Christ, not in history only, but in living truth and presence, as He Who is 'made unto us,' and given unto the world, as 'wisdom and

righteousness and sanctification and redemption'; that sublime fact, at once central and pervasive, at once historical and abiding—*that* is the truth by which we are all alike judged. Again and again have we felt, as we heard the Evangelical speak of what Christ is to him in closeness of personal presence, as we read the Jesuit motto 'Jesus only,' and thought of the passions of heroism which had been wrought and suffered under it, as we watched or shared the solemn reverence which sacramental worship of and through the Lord of the Sacrament can perhaps alone inspire—that to each and all of these one thing, and one only was vital, viz., the Divine fact, the gift of God Himself in reality and presence, not made by us, or fancied by us, but really given to us through the Christ and the Spirit. That is the vital thing. We have felt that the white-washed barn-like house, where nothing could interpose a charm or a suggestion between the soul and God, and the gorgeous church with sublime altar and tender music, are attempts to welcome, and cherish, to receive, *and not to 'conjure up'* that holy reality.

So far the author must be right; right as to what may seem at one time a Christian platitude, but at another time, and more rightly, a stupendous thing hardly to be grasped by the utmost boldness and steadfastness of faith, and not to be retained by any less power than the combined witness of the whole Christian community indwelt by the Spirit.

Here it is that the problem of unity and the problem of faith are seen to be most intimately bound up together. We are driven back to ask what we believe, why we believe it, and whose witness suffices for belief.

But, further yet, the author is surely right as to the

direction in which we of the English Church are to look for our own indispensable contribution, I mean the indispensable contribution of our own Church. It must have specifically to do with what in a famous phrase was called ' the extension of the Incarnation ' —and of the method of the Incarnation, that is, the tabernacling in, and adoption of, human lives and personality and particular chosen media in order to give to man that special manifestation, that distinctive though inclusive gift of Himself to man, which God gave and gives through Jesus Christ. The framework of Order, the Ministry given from above and specially empowered, the truth entrusted to earthen vessels in the language of Creeds, and the simple elements wonderfully used by consecration in the Sacrament : these are the things, generally called Catholic, for which our Church must stand : we cannot conceive that all which they have meant and mean in Christian experience can go by the board, or be explained as adulteration and accretion. But then the discipline through which God has put us has compelled us to realise how such truth as this may be and has been abused : that it carries with it imminent perils of materialising, of false lordship over God's heritage, of stiffening formalism. We think we see that the overwhelming answer to the *essentially exclusive* Roman claims to be the one representative of the divinely purposed Catholic order is that those perils have become realities of ever-increasing sway in the Roman communions and have taken shape as some of the most characteristic features of its later condition and life and teaching.

Is it not then possible, the writer asks, that the Church of England has had imposed upon her, and has partly recognised (though half-blindly and often with miserable

ineffectiveness) the duty, which in thought and practice is so often the hardest, of maintaining an ' antinomy,' of combining two principles which are indispensable to one another, and parts of equal right in the One Truth ? Of the Catholic side the author has spoken first and more at length because it is his own ; but he recognises with equal clearness that there are on the side of what is Protestant indispensable contributions of freedom, movement, and the unmediated work of the Holy Ghost in the soul of the believer and in the consciousness of the Church.

I leave to the author the fuller presentation of his own thoughts and suggestions. But I must add a word or two about the manner of it. I, at least, have never met a book in which there was so determined and steady and genuinely humble an effort to draw the sting of controversy by recognition of others' merits, and of one's own and of one's Church's shortcomings and blots. Almost to a fault, as some will think but not I, he follows the method of saying stronger things against his own people than against opponents, and of leaving them, brothers in separation, to do the like with equal candour on their own side. This seems to me almost to set up a new standard as to the temper of discussion.

It may be for this reason in part that he deals much more largely with his relation to Protestants on the one side of him, than with his relation to Roman Catholics on the other. Less can be usefully said where the quarrel with the opponents is largely due to the practical elevation of exclusiveness into a dogma.

For the rest I need hardly explain that I am very far from committing myself to all the author's expres-

sions or even meanings. His book is evidently one of a through and through independent and individual character. It could hardly be written by authority, but, if I am right, it is eminently one which authority should welcome and encourage as a free, fearless, charitable contribution to our most urgent needs.

I could easily make criticisms or ask questions, some of them upon matters of importance. I am not sure whether the author has wholly avoided the danger of those who know too much, or say too much, about such a mystery as that of the Lord's presence when we meet Him, and He gives to us Himself, in His Sacrament. But I am sure he knows the danger and means to avoid it : and that his firm repudiation of localising definition and practice on one side, and his appeal against the practical loss on the other of the characteristic power and beauty of the Sacrament, are landmarks of true thinking.

I might suggest, too, that he lays too little stress on the ordination of the Minister to preach the Word of God, as well as to lead His worship and bless in His Name. But I see that contrast colours and sharpens his expressions here : and I should have no fear but that explanations would remove even the appearance of difference.

Antinomies must be expressed in antithesis : and antitheses can hardly escape from crudeness. How little the author's treatment is really crude may be instanced by his treatment (pp. 205, 206) of the antithesis of reason and emotion.

There is plenty for critics to lay hold of fairly or unfairly. I do not think that the book will commend itself to those who are not genuinely men of good will. But I trust that from these it will receive something

more than ordinary welcome: and that they will confirm my own impression that it marks a step on the road forward, and something of a new beginning in what is usually called controversy.

EDW. WINTON.

Farnham Castle,
August 29th, 1912.

INTRODUCTION

It seems scarcely necessary at the present day to urge the need of religious unity. In the Christian faith, as in all true and living faith, the ideal of unity is implicit, since no one can hold a truth without desiring that all should share it. It is always difficult to say how far the ideal is effectively and consciously realised by the majority of Christian people, but certainly it is now becoming a living aspiration with multitudes for whom it has been little more than a pious dream. The World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh has provided its classic expression, but a great deal has been actually done, still more is being attempted, not only to express but to accomplish the ideal.

The movement in practical and effective form is modern. Only thirty or forty years ago, although many might regret disunion, we were all so boxed up in water-tight compartments that few imagined there was any way out of them. Not a few were even contented to defend the divisions which seemed so inevitable and to which we were so habituated. Is there not a real helpfulness in variety of method? Is not competition always a stimulus to energy?

The change of view which has taken place is not due to one, but to a whole mass of reasons which appeal to people in very different ways. We may arrange them in three main groups.

(*a*) Those which are most felt and make the widest appeal are naturally the practical reasons. No one can help seeing the waste both of money and labour through overlapping agencies. Not less serious are the waste in competition of the energy needed for progress, the loss of spiritual force in mere friction, the loss also of opportunities and of effectiveness through the difficulty of getting separate and often alienated bodies to combine even for purposes in which all are interested. Greater than any of these is the powerlessness, the open scandal, of a divided witness before the world.

To the outsider, to those who have little personal interest in religion, these considerations have always been obvious. To the religiously minded their significance has been brought home by the wider experience and more novel situations of the mission field. The comparative slowness of apprehension shown by those most concerned is no mere accident. Christianity is a gospel. The more earnestly and positively men realise and hold it, the more they know of its living power, the less easy it is for them to seek unity with those who differ on matters so vital. The rigidity of their water-tight compartments was due not so much to the narrowness as to the reality of their belief. The broad-mindedness of the unbeliever was due less to the far-sightedness of his vision than to his inability to appreciate and his consequent indifference to the meaning of what he saw.

(*b*) In religion, therefore, as in science, philosophy, politics, or commerce, the casual criticisms of the outsider,—although in the end they may prove to have been correct,—have no effective influence in the history of the subject. The early Greek philosophers had intuitions curiously suggestive of our theories of atoms,

and even of electrons, but their speculations were of no assistance to our physicists. True progress takes place amongst those who are in earnest, and who are in a position to follow up their ideas continuously.

The rapid change in the religious attitude towards the problem of unity owes a great deal of its impulse to the practical considerations given above, but it has been made possible, and it has been initiated, by deep-rooted changes in the theological outlook in a multitude of directions. Beliefs which were once the centre, and were felt to be the centre, of Christian life are now relegated to a secondary place. They have not been repudiated, they are not even abandoned, and yet they have somehow slipped away from us. There has been, so to speak, a change of mental routes, leaving the old land-marks, ports of call, distributing centres of mental commerce, far on one side. We do not know why the change has taken place; we do not know what has changed; we only know that our minds have changed. 'Mental routes' are not things most of us are given to thinking about. German philosophy which few of us read, German religious reconstructions which we only know at second-hand, lie at the basis of a new modern mind. The most potent influence of all is the influence of Biblical criticism which has cut loose the mooring of centuries. We are adrift without knowing quite why we are adrift, without any charts or other material for setting a course, without any clear conception of what we are leaving or where we are going to.

(*c*) The first group of reasons then were very real, but somewhat superficial; the second group are somewhat negative, somewhat disconcerting, for they imply a loss of belief; there is a third group of reasons for unity, which are full of hope. In peace, content easily

becomes self-content, and it is in that atmosphere that difference does its evil work, not only to others but first to ourselves, as faith in God turns to faith in our own theories. From competition and rivalry only too naturally there follows bitterness and self-justification, unreadiness to learn, unwillingness to admit that we have anything to learn, unwillingness to recognise our own failings or weaknesses lest we should give a handle to opponents, eagerness to judge lest we should be judged ourselves.

I am not going to maintain that this new situation saves us from these temptations. So long as men are men, so long will self-content, self-satisfaction, self-assertion, remain the first, the most natural, instinct for us all. It would be hard to prove that we were in general less self-confident, less sure of our own wisdom, more teachable than we used to be, and yet anxiety, perplexity, doubt, the slipping off of so much which, if it was a stay, was also a fetter, are helping very many of us to realise that if we are to meet the new intellectual situation at all, it must be by a larger and deeper understanding of Christianity than we have yet attained. Our ideals of unity are not wholly ideals of organisations and conveniences ; we are gaining also something of a new spirit, a spirit of readiness to learn. The movement towards unity, the growing appreciation of its importance, is a far more complex phenomenon than I think most of us recognise. It is a movement mainly among the Protestant or ' Free Church ' bodies. The Catholic bodies, Roman or Anglican, are in a somewhat different position. They have been, of course, affected by the new theological currents, though to a much less marked degree. On the other hand, the unity of the Church has always been a definite part of

their theory, and they have always been in consequence very conscious of what I called the practical considerations.

I am here writing as a Catholic in the belief that we as Catholics have a real help to give, yet I am very well aware of the difficulties in the way. We habitually think of our body as ' the Church ' ; we speak of it as ' Catholic,' in a belief that to the unity of the Church every Christian ought to belong. Believing, therefore, that that unity already exists, we have of necessity held aloof from the efforts to constitute a unity. At the same time this exclusive claim, advanced for what is only one body among many, not only seems to others presumptuous and self-contradictory, it is in practice one of the greatest difficulties in the way of that unity on which we profess to set so high a value.

Nevertheless, let us look for a moment, not at what is immediately under our eyes or immediately possible, but at the whole sweep of the question. Here are two large groups of bodies which we call Catholic and Protestant. Both groups are divided among themselves, though in very different ways. The Catholic differences are very sharp cut, clearly expressed, not easily to be got over. The Protestant bodies have also their divisions, some formal, which may be overcome, and others of a doctrinal kind between the old and new beliefs, which are very difficult either to express or to deal with, which it may be possible to escape dealing with.

In face of this situation, it is natural to ask ourselves what we can do just now, but it is also well to ask to what we are ultimately looking forward. The present is very fascinating, but to what does it lead ? The Protestant differences are by way of being adjusted.

There is no immediate likelihood of a similar success on the Catholic side, but supposing there were, supposing we all drew together into our two camps, plainly this would not be a reunion of Christendom. Can we imagine we should be any nearer a reunion?

There are two ways of approaching a problem of this kind. We may begin in the easiest and most practical way with those detailed advances within our reach. Or, we may grasp at once the great general, underlying questions which in the end we shall have to face, and we may ask what light they throw on the lesser points. Call it science or call it art, strategy or statesmanship,—which is the sounder procedure? Oh, those water-tight compartments! Are we not like passengers who, having been flooded out of their state-rooms, cluster in the saloon, congratulating themselves on the wisdom of their escape from narrowing restrictions, but without any thought of passengers in the other classes, of the steerage, of the crew, or even of the ship itself?

What after all is the nature of the unity we seek? Is it, can it be, merely a unity of organisations? Are we asking merely, how can we work together without the friction of an active opposition? What place in that union do our beliefs take? Surely they cannot mean so little to us that we must treat them as something which we are forced to maintain, but after all as rather an encumbrance than a help in the movement we would fain make. Surely this attitude must be wrong. What can be the value of our organisations, our systems, our forms, if they are not the expression, the embodiment, the forms, of the belief of our hearts? If that is so with us now, it must be equally so with that to which God bids us move forward. If we are

to have a true and vital unity, which shall have been not merely constructed, but which shall grow and hold together by its own life, surely we must begin from the other side. We must get down to the real meaning and power of our convictions, ask, not merely whether there are not elements in the systems, but whether there are not elements in the convictions, of others which we need, which might be and ought to be co-ordinated with our own.

It is only from this side that I can approach the question. Of the movements in progress, I know nothing more than is known by everybody interested, but I have been asking myself continually what are the essential, what are the distinctive, principles of Catholicity and Protestantism respectively, not only as they have been given in formal statements, but far more as revealed in the systems they have shaped for themselves, in the manifold results which they have been and are bringing forth. These principles have been tested, developed, modified, worked out and adapted under the strain of history, under the variety of the demands which new needs and new ways of thought made upon them.

If, then, we ask what are the two distinctive principles, the answer seems simple enough. Every newspaper writer has at the tip of his pen a whole assortment of phrases which describe the difference with sufficient accuracy. We all know them ; we all accept them ; we all use them. Do we, however, mean anything by them ? If we do, plainly three questions must rise up before us. (*a*) Are we to say that one of these principles is right and the other wrong ? If so, it is no use talking of unity, for truth has no fellowship with falsehood. There is before us only a long vista

of strife, while we settle which is which. (*b*) If the history and vitality of these convictions forbids us to say that either can be wholly wrong, are we to treat them as mere alternatives, it being a matter of indifference which a man takes? Can we seriously mean that the gospel is built thus in two halves? If we are not prepared to accept such a glaring dualism, (*c*) must we not infer that these principles are necessary to one another, necessary to the wholeness of Christianity, and therefore to the fulfilment and even maintenance of Christian life?

If, then, the very simple and obvious phrases are right, if 'Catholicism and Protestantism represent different aspects and sides of Christianity,' if it be true that 'we have a great deal to learn from one another,' then our task is plain. In just this way, we must set to work. We must each find out what we have missed, and how the essential truth which others realise can be reconciled with that which we ourselves possess in order that we may learn to realise and possess ourselves also of that we have not got. There are few Protestants who will not admit in general terms that Catholicity has after all its strong points, nor will any Catholic deny that Protestantism has its strong points. And spiritual strength cannot mean anything other than truth, cannot be a result of anything but truth.

I have started therefore from the easy and simple platitude that 'we have each a great deal to learn.' I have tried to analyse each system in its actual working form, to trace out the fundamental conviction on which it rests, to trace out also what it would seem that it had yet to learn, I have tried also to compare the distinctive principles with the actual results as they are commonly recognised in the different religious

bodies. I have found the enquiry amazingly difficult, for, though the general characters were obvious enough to everybody and admitted by everybody, the moment one came to definite statements those to whom I talked disowned them. Hardly anybody would admit that his own body failed in any single particular, that there was anything it did not fully possess, or apparently that it had anything to learn.

Whether this attempt of mine will be of any service, I cannot say, but I would earnestly press upon the reader these considerations. These differences do exist. Their history, the results they produce, the fruitless controversies which have grown out of them, show how deep-seated are the mental differences from which they spring. I have only tried to find the meaning of the broadest and least disputed facts, and to set it out in the broadest and simplest way. Whether I have done my work well or ill is of only the smallest consequence, but it is of well-nigh infinite consequence that the thing should be done. There are always five hundred ways for explaining away facts, and an equal number for explaining away explanations, but there the facts are all the same, and until we get some understanding of their real meaning we are helpless to deal with them, helpless to escape from their disastrous consequences.

Talking in this vague way of principles is somewhat tedious, if I do not explain what are the principles I have in mind. It is the business of the following chapters to make those clear. I speak here in generalities, because I am speaking first of a general aim or method. And that general method of bringing principles together is one generally approved. But it may be helpful, it may be of some interest, if I give some

account of how I was led personally to the position I am here taking up. At least it will give me an opportunity of explaining my obligations to others.

I have said I approach the question as a 'Churchman' or as a Catholic. Up to 1908 I had never, in fact, seriously approached the question at all. I was duly in a water-tight compartment. In that year I was persuaded, or over-persuaded, to attend the summer camp of the Student Christian Movement at Baslow. We had been asked to go on a genuinely Inter-Denominational basis. We were not asked to waive or conceal our convictions. We were there to help one another, and were there to learn from one another. We were also free to criticise. I do not say that we were all free from the bondage of party and controversy. Some of us were, and at least there was nothing but our own selves to keep us in bondage. We were responsible to God and to our brethren for love and truth, but we had no other responsibilities. There were no reporters, weaker brethren, or authorities, on the look-out for 'remarkable statements,' causes of stumbling, or questionable views. It is a glorious thing to be a student. It is not quite the same thing as being a learner, but at least it offers one a good start on that most Christian path.

It does not lie with the Student Christian Movement to provide a solution of the tremendous questions here at stake, yet it is only right to say that I believe that body, by its executive and members, has done and is doing more than any one, or any group of people, in England to make a solution of this question possible. It has brought us together under the best possible circumstances, so that we can learn what we have to give, what is the real meaning of our own position, what

also are our weaknesses and our needs, what others have to give us. Whatever I have been able to learn of the true value of a ' Free Church ' principle, I owe to this source.

The absorbing interest of the Camp was that one had there the best possible representation of what one may call ' British Religion ' on its best side, but in all its variety and in all its confusion. Certainly to my mind there were grave deficiencies in the Camp theology, which I believed would develop, were developing, into grave dangers. Had the Church any help to give ? The belief with which I went was that I have described above, that which is ordinarily called ' High Church.' I believed the Church to be that unity which Jesus Christ had Himself established, so I believe now, but then on what did it rest, for what was it established ? By itself this was a theory of organisation, and merely in that form it was not helpful to these questions. The Camp was deeply concerned over the very essence of Christianity ; it was not concerned over ecclesiastical organisations.

There were a good many Churchmen in Camp, and I do not think any of us saw clearly what message God wanted us to give. It was about this time I read two remarkable papers by the Bishop of Lebombo ; one was written for the Pan-Anglican Conference of 1908, the other for *The East and West* (Oct. 1908). The Bishop pointed out that the whole difference between us and the Non-Conformists was over the Sacraments. We could recognise all that they claimed for their ministry, but they were not willing to admit our sacramental belief, and the sacramental power we claimed for our ministry. This change of the centre of the problem from the mere High Church doctrine

of Church authority to what I may call the Catholic doctrine of a sacramental gift and Presence seemed to me a suggestion of the greatest value. It brought the whole question out of its merely ecclesiastical aspect into direct connection with the personal spiritual life in its relation to God, to man, to the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. There are few to whom I have talked, whether Churchmen or Non-Conformists who did not realise that the question entered here on a new and more hopeful phase.

So far for the Church's contribution. On the other side, it was impossible to contemplate so much earnest enthusiasm without seeing that whatever defects it might have, its defects were the cause of its weaknesses and of its dangers ; they could not be the secret of its power. It was borne up by very positive convictions of its own. It was by no means easy for an outsider to discover precisely what these were. I owe whatever grasp I gained on that side to a most striking pamphlet containing a paper read by the late Rev. Heriz Smith at the Salisbury Diocesan Conference, which pointed out the immense freedom and variety of services allowed in the mediaeval system. I doubt if the writer realised, he does not refer to, the way in which this variety maintained unity by the fact that it went together with, based itself on, the unity of the sacramental presentation in the mass.

These two ideas seemed to me to have a significance as they corresponded to the two sides of our common intellectual life,—which we call fact and theory, or observation and reflection. In our religious life the somewhat one-sided use we make of each seems to explain the distinctive characters, the strong points and the weak points, of Anglicanism and Non-Con-

formity. Can we disentangle these principles, and, having once got them clear, can we show their necessary relations to one another? That is my main business. If we can reconcile the principles, can we look for a reconciliation of Anglicans and Non-Conformists? That is my ultimate hope.

I ought not, of course, to make either of the writers I have referred to responsible for the use or development of the ideas with which they supplied me. One last obligation I must confess. All that I have ever learnt of theological method, of the analysing of ideas, their meaning and significance, of their reference to experience and the facts of life, of the possibility and the way of co-ordinating ideas and experience, all that I may possess that is worth possessing, I owe to Frederick Denison Maurice. I never knew him in life; except once I have hardly looked at a book of his for twenty-five years, but I owe him everything. I am told people do not read him now. From what I can see of our present theological position I should think that is very probable. I am told he is difficult to follow, and I am afraid that is true. But I believe none the less that his is the help and guidance we need more than any other.

Before I go on to describe the general plan I have followed in this book, I should like to say one word of apology and explanation to my friends in America, and to any readers I may have in that country.

I know enough of America to know that this problem is far more pressing and far more difficult there than it is here. I know enough, and I believe enough in America, to be inclined to think that it is possible, and not at all unlikely, that the solution may come from America rather than from England. Yet, if any in

America do read this book, they will find that it is written—apparently—from a purely English view. I hope I may trust their intelligence to see that my very British way of treating things is only on the surface. I am thinking of America very much.

If I dare, therefore, I should like to address this book to America very specially. But then I am only an Englishman. We have in this country a very convenient terminology, with distinctive words like 'Non-Conformist' and 'Free Church,' to include all non-episcopalian bodies. If I tried to adapt my language and illustrations to conditions with which I am not really familiar, I am afraid I should only cause amusement and perhaps irritation without being in the least better understood. A man living in one country may be able to say much that will be useful in another. If it is to be useful, he had better leave the application to those who know how to apply it. I have more trust in American intelligence than in my British ignorance.

I have divided this book into three parts. The first I have called the Religious Difference. If we can for the moment assume the old-fashioned Evangelical faith in Christ as constituting the central ground of Christianity in which we are agreed, our obvious differences are over the religious practices by which that faith is being realised and set forth. I must try, then, first, to show why we Churchmen cannot accept the most obvious forms of reunion as satisfactory, and, secondly, what is the spiritual meaning and force of that essential Church principle of sacraments, and why we feel it so necessary.

So far I deal only with the Church or Catholic side. The second part I have called a Synthesis of Principles. The Church Principle is a somewhat angular and rigid

claim, difficult to make room for. The Non-Conformist Principle I take to be the individual principle of freedom, which is, of course, not at all angular or rigid, but I do not think that our friends realise that it is still harder to get in. The rigid things of life are uncompromising, but after all they ask nothing more than their own place. Freedom is rather apt to be tyrannous. Just because it objects to the confinement of a limited space, it becomes a claim to the whole area. Nevertheless in life we always have to use both, and we do in religion. It is vitally necessary, therefore, that we should consider what is the proper ground of each, how they are related, how they can be used together consistently and harmoniously.

The difficulty of a sacramental presentation in religious practice repeats itself in the doctrinal use of Creeds. We have here really two questions. (*a*) Are the Creeds to be regarded as purely intellectual statements of beliefs or opinions, and what part has the intellectual recognition of 'facts' to play in the spiritual life? (*b*) At the present day it is no longer possible simply to take the old Evangelical faith for granted. We are bound to face the question whether there is a foundation of fact at all.

If I were writing purely for instruction, it would be much simpler if I could have begun from the doctrinal ground, and then worked out the logical consequences in our practical system. But this is not the actual course of thought along which men's minds travel. When we come to an age of reflection, we find ourselves already members of a system. It is the difficulties we find in it, and in our practical life, the contrasts presented by other systems, which force us to consider what lies beneath them. Most of us only realise the

value of principles as they are shown to us in application. I have therefore followed this path of experience, working first from the most obvious and surface differences, because for most people it is the easiest path to follow, though it necessarily involves a good deal of repetition. In each fresh situation we may be re-applying the same principle, and yet, except to the scientifically minded, the principle seems different, calls for a re-vindication, because the application is different.

I am not therefore engaged with some problem of abstract theological science. I have dared to write about a question that touches us all most nearly, that has called forth among religious people more excitement and bitterness, among irreligious people more superior and contemptuous criticism, than any other. It would be useless for me to ask that what I say should be considered coolly and with impartial detachment. No one is in the least likely to read these chapters who has not the most real and living interest in the subject, and no one is in the least likely to have such an interest unless he has already a stand-point of his own. Certainly I have never been impartial myself, and I have no desire that anyone else should be.

I am here concerned ultimately with that faith which alone makes life worth living, which found life a sordid round of aimless labour, flecked with meaningless pleasures, and has turned it all—pleasures, labours, failures, achievements, together—into a mystery of joy inexplicable and hope undefinable. I am concerned immediately with what has been infinitely precious to me, with what has made that faith to me real and living, with what, if it be not true, would leave me altogether puzzled and distraught as to the very meaning and possibility of that faith. How can I profess

myself impartial when I am in fact eagerly longing that others also should have like fellowship with us? But then I cannot fail to recognise that this is the exact expression of the position others also hold. Have they not also something to give, something equally real, equally necessary? Why should I ask them for impartiality?

If we look back at all this long strife, can we really believe in God, and yet believe that the passionate earnestness of our forefathers was left to go astray while the contempt of the idly indifferent and worldly was the road of truth? But then, I would press the question further. If we will not for a moment accept this on one side, that is, on our own side, can we accept it as a true estimate on the opposed side? Can we really believe that all this blood and tears and prayers and patience were ever offered for nothing, out of an illusion begotten of mere obstinacy? And veil it as you will, these sacrifices were offered on both sides. But if we shrink from any such view, must it not follow that there were vital truths on both sides, which God allowed to develop in separation, but which,—if both are true, —must in His will be brought together? Is it not the whole weakness of Christianity that we are holding in separation what God means, in His own time, to show as one? Impartiality is such a bloodless thing to ask for. I do appeal to men earnestly to seek how this unity can be made a unity and a reconciling in convictions. My own effort at it, my own analysis, may be poor enough, but is it not something on this line which needs trying, something which shall begin by finding what these convictions are, and what is implied in their whole nature and consequence?

PART I.

THE RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCE.

CHAPTER I.

PROPOSALS FOR REUNION.

I AM afraid this book must begin somewhat awkwardly. My immediate aim is to explain certain Church principles, in an entirely positive and constructive spirit to show their necessity and helpfulness. I have no desire at all to defend Church people, and I am very anxious not to be merely critical or negative. Yet I must spend one chapter at least in defence of ourselves and criticism of others. After all, I am writing a whole book on a question which seems to many so simple that a few sensible people could settle it all with a little good temper in five minutes. For the sake of what comes after I must therefore make it clear why we Churchmen cannot accept these attractive solutions, why I think any real solution must go so much deeper, must call for far more earnest thought, patience, teachableness, why it will be so much more difficult to reach.

If we listen to popular talk and to popular opinion we shall learn that there are many easy and popular remedies for our divisions, though each speaker is convinced that his own is just the plain common-sense treatment which religious people are only kept from recognising by their fanatical narrow-mindedness. In speaking seriously to serious and earnest men one feels

somewhat ashamed of taking any notice of these self-confident pronouncements, the superficial echo of the daily paper and the smoking-room, yet they have their value. Rough common-sense indicates to us those broad aspects of the question which most want thinking over. Its clumsiness warns us how easily our merely practical scheme may miss the real heart of the difficulty.

'The immediate root of our disunion lies obviously enough in difference of character or temperament, which produces differences in our way of thinking, in our opinions and preferences. Religious differences among religious people must be inevitable, since all differences are drawn out the more sharply just in proportion to the interest we have in the subject and the strength of the influence it has on our life.' Let this stand for the obvious popular view; we shall all admit that there is a great deal of truth in it. There is not, however, only one obvious conclusion to be drawn from it; there are two.

Certainly we may infer that intellectual unity, a unity in thought, is impossible, for even if there is a fixed truth, it is impossible for us to know what it is. The promise of the Gospel—'ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free'—must be regarded as a vain illusion.

Yes, we may infer this, but there are many who infer the exact opposite. 'Truth there must be, and truth is one. Since individual thinking can only lead to endless diversities, the unity of truth must lie with some authority from whom we should be content to receive it.' And this conclusion is as valid as the other.

'But the second conclusion is altogether a contra-

diction.' In this shape I fully admit it is. If a man is to learn and understand, it is he who must learn ; no authority can understand for him. Authority may be a guide and a help in thinking ; it is not a substitute for it. But then the fact is that both conclusions are contradictions. If the one offers us a unity in thought on condition we give up thinking, the other saves for us the right to think by proclaiming that thinking is an entirely useless occupation.

Few Christians, few for whom I write, will be at all inclined to accept and still less to advance either of these conclusions in the naked form in which I state them. I gave them as ' obvious ' results, asserted so to be by the rough and unconsidered judgment of those who love the obvious. And yet these conclusions are not entirely confined to those whom I described as men of the world. Most of us who are concerned with religion have been brought up in traditional observances and beliefs. We got free from them because we were forced out of them to face a new situation, but it still remains that on this question of unity we are being driven forward rather by the pressure of the practical, than by the consciousness of theoretical or intellectual necessity. There is so much crying out to be done. We are convinced that the faith of Christ has in itself an answer to all the perplexities of men, yet we cannot help realising that while Christianity is a personal faith, its power for good in the world is as a faith shared. What we are striving to effect only can be effected by common action, and common action must always proceed from what there is of common belief, however far back we go to find it.

At the same time most of us have been content to hold our beliefs practically, as something to live by.

Very few have made any effort to examine closely into their meaning or to connect them into a thought-out system. We may be vaguely conscious, we may be most uncomfortably conscious, of difficulties, but we are hardly in a position to judge of the sufficiency or insufficiency of our beliefs, and we are therefore still less in a position to realise the meaning or estimate the value of the beliefs of others.

This seems to me a very dangerous position to be in. Practical necessity is driving us in directions which our minds have not justified, forcing us into courses which we do not really understand. Thus we turn half naturally into devising or constructing unities of a kind which may serve our need, but which involve consequences we have not considered and never meant to accept. The two commonest of these forms must receive careful study.

Undenominational Unity. Personally I should feel inclined to say Undenominationalism was a theory proper to politicians and men of the world rather than to the religiously minded. I believe I am justified in saying that it is the politicians who originated and have pressed the theory. I have to admit that many religious people have accepted it, and I suppose that they would not altogether agree with my views, but it will not I think be denied that Undenominationalism follows most naturally from the practical, non-theoretical, perhaps outsider's, view of Christianity. Here, anyhow, shall be its statement :

'Is not the essential basis of Christianity broad enough and solid enough for all practical requirements ? If so, surely we may content ourselves with the essentials and cease to trouble over denominational differences of merely secondary importance. If we cannot

give them up altogether, at least we can leave them free for those who find profit in them.'

I challenge this theory as being (1) in its wording a useless truism ; (2) in its reasoning question-begging ; (3) in its whole intention disastrous to all belief. It satisfies the politicians easily enough because they are concerned only with the outside of Christianity, nevertheless it has brought endless confusion into their politics ; it has utterly misled them as to the nature of the problems with which they are dealing. The actual wording I have given is my own, but the fact is that the theory of Undenominationalism cannot be expressed without involving itself in all these criticisms.

(1) The statement is a truism; and it has the peculiar danger of so many truisms that it veils an unconsidered answer to a difficult question under cover of a useless obviousness which has really said nothing at all. Who in the world is expected to deny, and who in the world is any better for being reminded, that he ought not to give too much importance to what is unimportant ?

(2) This valuable piece of advice gives no help in determining what is essential, what is important, and what is ' too much.' Having got thus far it jumps the whole question in the unprepared remark, to which nothing leads up, that denominational differences are secondary.

But what is the meaning of ' secondary ' ? In popular use that word is often applied, in the sense of accidental, to what has no necessary connection with a principle, and therefore is of no importance so far as the principle itself is concerned. But secondary in its true sense has nothing to do with importance ; it signifies only that that to which it is applied is *derivative.*

To say that all denominational differences are

secondary is to make a very large assumption indeed. Personally I have maintained that all *religious forms* are secondary in the true sense, since they are the outcome or expression of the relation between God and man, but it does not follow that they are unimportant. There are very many Church practices which we use and find helpful, but upon which we have no desire to insist. There are others which—although we could not call them the essence of Christianity—seem to us a necessary consequence, embodiment, presentation of that essence.

Our reasons for this view I must give presently, but whether it be right or wrong cannot be settled in the off-hand sweep of an adjective. We have a right to ask for serious consideration, and we base our claim on grounds which are equally precious to all,—Non-Conformists as well as Churchmen. The obscure by-ways of history are full of foolish theories and trivial controversies which have long since proved their emptiness. But to apply this contemptuous judgment to convictions for which we find earnest and capable men contending, living, dying, during long centuries, only demonstrates the ignorance and short-sightedness of the judge.

Let it be granted that our religious differences are secondary. Are they not therefore worth considering? Whenever among those holding the same principles, some will not accept the conclusions others draw, either there must be some latent and unperceived difference in the meaning put upon those principles, or else there must be some inconsistency in following them out. But the principles that are our common starting point are nothing less than the principles of Christianity itself. Will any Christian maintain that

the meaning of Christianity and the consistency of Christian practice are not worth troubling over ?

(3) So far I have dealt with the proposal of an undenominational unity from the outsider's point of view. It is natural that those who know little or nothing of the meaning of religion should assume that its minor distinctions are meaningless, but this rough common-sense is not very far from rough ignorance, which is a somewhat unsatisfactory standard for the judgment of what should be reckoned minor. Undenominationalism, so far as it has any definite programme to put forward, urges the abandonment, or relative abandonment, of points of difference. I am appealing now to religious people, and to them I urge that a policy of abandonments must be disastrous to Christian faith.

We are told that in religious matters our best hope is to go back to something simpler, to give up what we thought we had learnt, yet in everything else except religion God is bidding us go forward and learn more as He unfolds to us more of the ways and purposes of His will. It is a law of life that men may only reach to good by progress and to knowledge by learning, for life and nature are great things and very complex, full of the infinite wisdom of God, not to be grasped offhand by a single effort. Christianity, which is the interpretation and key of both, is greater than either and yet more wonderful. Reverence for what is worth knowing implies a readiness to learn, a longing for a knowledge fuller, richer, more consistent than we have yet attained, and in God's purpose our longing is a sign of our need for that knowledge. We strive to work out the fullest consequences of our belief, not in order to justify them, but that we may understand them

better, and that facing whatever is defective in them we may seek what is needed for their completeness.

Surely when this is true of all other sciences, we cannot mean that Christianity alone is a thing so scanty that he understands it best who believes least. And if true unity does lie in the uniformity of poverty, how far back along the road shall we go? We are urged to drop our denominational differences to unite in a common Christianity. But if this means what is called 'orthodox' Christianity, it is only a half measure. We cannot be unconscious that just a little beyond there is still a chorus of voices clamouring insistently that we should drop our dogmatic presuppositions about Christ, 'Let us all join—orthodox Christians, undogmatic Christians, and heathen—in one whole unity on the basis of our common religion.' But why should we draw the line only at Theists? 'Are not all lovers of the good at heart one? There is one common moral ideal for all.' Whether that one common moral ideal will stand fast, they know best who know most. Those who know little of what is going on imagine easily that the line can be drawn at this or that point, but up this road there are in truth no lines. Each stage only opens up another. Each gains a wider unity at the expense of meaning, power and life. By eliminating differences we cease to differ, but when they are all gone, in what are we united?

To the modern mind undenominationalism has an attraction which it finds irresistible in spite of all disappointments. To men of the world it offers an easy method for getting rid of troublesome questions. The only annoying part is that, of course, they are not got rid of. To the more religious it offers the comforting sensation of broad-mindedness, which if it is not the

same as love, at least provides a passable substitute. It is really curious that people should not recognise how narrow and limited its breath is. Undenominationalism is tolerant enough of half-beliefs and unbeliefs, but it not merely is, by its very nature it must be, extremely intolerant of positive convictions,—much more so than any other 'ism' need be. If I believe in the Mutation theory of the origin of species, or if I believe in Protection, and my friend believes in the Natural Selection of species, or in Free Trade, we may quarrel, but after all we can respect one another, and we may begin asking whether the opposed theories might not be co-ordinated. We can also respect the astronomer who knows nothing of biology or politics and thinks our questions narrow and trivial. It is not his fault that he is too ignorant to give us any help, but it is pure narrow-mindedness that he is too 'superior' to give us any respect.

Loyalty to honest conviction is a first intellectual duty. If a man holds a belief to be very vital, or if he holds it to be silly, either way he ought not to allow himself to be frightened out of his opinion for fear he should be thought 'narrow.' Yet between these two, the man who affirms and the man who denies, the believer and the unbeliever, the *prima facie* probability is with the former. The man with a conviction declares that he sees this thing to be true and important, and he pretty certainly must have seen something. The critic cannot easily be sure of more than his own failure to see. If the critic is also a scoffer and 'superior,' by all Gospel teaching he stands self-condemned. He may happen to be in the right, but his evidence is valueless. He was not in a mental condition to see anything.

I maintain, therefore, that whatever a man's beliefs may be, right or wrong, broad or narrow, he ought by all means to follow them out. He has no right, and he ought not to be asked, to abandon what he sincerely holds. I do not, of course, mean that if a man holds evil beliefs, he ought to do evil things, for that would imply that he ought to go on holding a thing to be right when he finds it wrong. We rejoice that men are so often 'better than their creed,' but a false or an evil creed is an evil all the same, and it is an evil which might be got rid of if men would honestly face its consequences and ask themselves whether they meant them. The evil is perpetuated by easy-going inconsistency and lack of seriousness.

We are told that there was a business man who was positive the world would come to an end the next year, and went on financing companies to come into existence the year after. When expostulated with, he replied, 'Sir, business is one thing, and unfulfilled prophecy is another.' Certainly he was right to go on with his business, but certainly he was wrong to persuade himself or to pretend that he was holding beliefs which he did not seriously mean.

Inter-denominationalism. To the man-in-the-street, to the daily paper which thinks for him and the politician who acts for him, undenominationalism remains as popular as ever; among sincerely religious men there is a growing sense of its inadequacy. The only alternative immediately obvious is inter-denominationalism. Can we not at least ask different bodies to come together as they are without any abandonment of their distinctive convictions, beliefs, organisations, or practices?

The significance of the proposal depends upon how

much is intended by the words 'coming together.' There are three different applications of the idea which may be expressed as Conference, Co-operation and Federation.

(1) To reunion of any kind conference is an indispensable step. Before we can do anything, we must get to know one another, what we are each seeking, what each believes himself to possess. If such conferences are to be of any use, they must be frankly inter-denominational in the full sense given above. Those who come to them cannot be expected to compromise, modify or abandon the principles on which they are to confer. On the contrary, they must be asked and expected to state and explain them as fully, as definitely, and as fearlessly as possible, since it is the very object of such conferences to get a clear conception of the exact nature of the differences as well as of agreements. Each in turn must also be ready to give full attention and sympathetic consideration to the statements and explanations of others.

(2) Even as things stand with us, there are certain matters of practical convenience and limited scope in which co-operation between religious bodies may be possible and of some service until a truer unity is possible.

(3) In conference inter-denominationalism finds its true sphere : in co-operation it ought not to be regarded as more than at best a temporary expedient. There is, however, a distinct proposal on the part of many to find the final solution of our difficulties by organising co-operation as a permanent system under the name of Federation. If that is carried out completely, it must imply a mutual recognition by the different bodies of one another's status.

I quite realise the attractiveness of this proposal, but it is no use making up schemes which would fit circumstances if they were different to what they are. We are dealing with certain convictions, and I think I can show that this scheme on its own principles cannot be applied consistently to any convictions,—and certainly it cannot be applied to those of the Church.

Let us be quite clear exactly what are the principles of this proposed federation. Certain differences exist —differences of conviction, belief and system. There is to be no abandoning, modifying or compromising of these, and all bodies are to join in one unity. Then I reply that either (*a*) the differences, or (*b*) the unity, must become increasingly unreal, and that both results will be equally disastrous.

(*a*) A man's convictions and beliefs are the inspiration and guide of his work. If he is to be a teacher, these are what he teaches. Plainly there can be no co-operation in matters wherein men differ, but only on those matters wherein they agree. Just so far as co-operation is systematically applied, just in proportion as it becomes an important factor in our religious work, just so far must all differences be held in abeyance. And this is a very serious matter.

Every action a man performs strengthens and develops the principles which it realises and on which it is based. Conversely, it weakens his interest in, and his sense of the importance of, those which are reserved or excluded. It is ever so easy to say that we are to maintain and not to compromise our convictions, but we are not maintaining and we are compromising that which we may not use. All of us who have had experience in religious work know only too well that men more often let their faith die through neglect and want

of use than kill it by a definite and thought-out repudiation.

Again, any systematic and complete co-operation must involve mutual recognition. But, our whole Church contention is that certain things are necessary and essential consequences of Christianity. On the inter-denominational basis we shall not be asked to compromise that contention, yet we are asked to 'recognise' systems which do not admit those things we hold to be necessary.

Inter-denominational federation in the form of co-operation is then only another name for undenominationalism. It cannot be applied to those convictions or beliefs which a man holds to be necessary, those which constitute the inspiration and power of his life, but only to those which are to him mere intellectual opinions or personal preferences.

(*b*) Next, let us suppose that the inter-denominational principle is fully and really carried out, and that each body is to be allowed to maintain and act upon its own belief, the results of federation will be quite obvious, but are they the results we are seeking? We must face that question.

Our differences are due to the variety—and the variety implies limitation and imperfection—in our apprehension and following out of the greatness and many-sidedness of Christian truth. But why has God made us so imperfect? Why has He dealt to us the knowledge of Himself in so fragmentary a fashion? If we ask in impatience, we ask in sin. If we ask humbly, in order that we may know God's will, surely God has answered us. He has made us in weakness and in need because He has made us for love and for help. Difference, which is the result of weakness, was

ordained as the ground of union. But when we look for help, a federation of differences,—if it does not mean undenominationalism, the abandonment of everything in which we differ and therefore of everything in which we might help,—means nothing more than a distant toleration. Where we ask for unity, it organises the permanence of separation.

Inter-denominationalism is, in short, essentially the system of toleration. Toleration has the outward charm and attraction of broad-mindedness, but although it has a really useful and necessary place in our life, it also involves all the weaknesses of broad-mindedness, and it is very important that we should not allow the attractiveness of such words to prevent our being critical of their use. Toleration is not an essential part of Christianity, but love is, and toleration must be tried by love.

Towards difference there are three possible attitudes. We may believe that those differences are concerned with important distinctions of right and wrong, truth and falsehood. If we cannot do anything, love and wisdom preach patience, and patience is a form of tolerance. But if we can do anything, love bids us be intolerant, for right and truth are our stewardship. This is the ground of all missionary effort. But again, the differences may be of preference and relative ability. Here toleration is a duty, for love envieth not the possessions and capacities of others. Lastly, we may be in uncertainty as to what is true and right and what otherwise. Here also love counselleth patience and toleration as conditions of learning.

The Hope of Unity. So far I am afraid our attitude on this question will seem wholly captious and negative. I am almost more afraid that others will be content to

accept it as such. The Church will make no compromise, perhaps cannot make one consistently ; therefore it must be left out of count. The only practical unity is that among Protestants, and yet this,—for reasons already given,—is a conclusion of despair. It is a proclamation that the unity of Christendom is impossible.

If I thought my conclusions must be finally negative, I should not have had the heart to put them forward, but in truth it is the unity offered which seems to us so negative. We want a larger faith, and we are told how much better we should get on if we had less. We long for brotherhood and unity, and we are offered the bars of an organised isolation which shall keep us from quarrelling. It seems to us that this negative result is inevitable, for our proposals start from the wrong side. All plans to construct a human unity, based upon human apprehensions, must involve themselves in confusion and contradiction just because the human side is the side not of unity, but of difference. Life cannot be made ; it can only be found. A living unity cannot be constructed, but it already exists in the Christianity we are trying to apprehend. So long as we set our own theories, schemes, opinions before us as the main element to be considered, the more we think and reason and argue, the more acute our differences will grow and must grow. Once we realise that truth is primary and our apprehensions secondary, once we realise that our faith stands in the truth and not in our opinions about it, differences may still continue, but we shall draw nearer to one another as we learn more, and as we apprehend better.

This distinction between the truth and the apprehension seems to us the key of all hope. It is the

greatest weakness of our Christianity that in spite of all the warning of our differences, in spite of the hosts of new theories which every day brings forth, discordant with one another, as well as with our old beliefs, we seem to assume that we know all about Christianity, although we have hardly given any serious thought to it. We take new ideas up because they strike us, or we let ideas drop when some objection suggests itself, and it never occurs to us that the infinite riches of the meaning and power of Christianity have to be learnt and understood. It comes more naturally to make up our own notions without troubling to ask whether they are consistent, or whether we are not missing the whole value and life of our faith.

I have used terms above which I have yet to justify, but when anyone speaks of the truth of Christ as ' the Catholic faith,' by calling it ' Catholic,' something which is for all men, do we not imply that it is something greater than any one man or group of men or any one age can possibly reach or ' possess ' ? When we call it a ' faith ' are we not implying that it has yet come down to us, is seeking to possess us ? So at least I should take it, and for that reason I am not putting forth some opinions of my own or of those who think with me as the necessarily correct opinions which others ought to accept. So far from ' possessing ' this faith, I confess that we on our side have learnt and understood it, yielded ourselves up to it, very imperfectly. I only put forward this as the hope of unity—that there is a faith which does ask for patient learning, understanding, submission on our side. We look to our brethren in hope that by their help we may together be able to enter into it more fully.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE.

CERTAIN proposals then have been put forward for reunion. I have ventured to criticise them because it seemed to me that merely practical measures were insufficient and might be disastrous. We want first a clearer conception of what we are dealing with, and what it is which wants reconciling. I have suggested a different procedure which seems to me to have in it the seed of a higher hope, of a greater success. Christianity rests upon certain principles. Our unity must lie rather in the Christianity itself than in our apprehension. If we understood its principles better, should we not understand one another better? If we begin by studying them together, might we not be already drawing nearer to one another? As we enter into the Christian life more fully, should we not by that communion, reach a far higher ideal of unity than mere co-operation?

I will try to explain in this chapter what I mean by Christian principle in a way which will, I hope for the most part, be accepted by all, both Churchmen and Non-Conformists. Christianity may be regarded in several ways which it is well to classify. So many controversies have ended in mere confusion because men have been in too much hurry and too excited to think

of explaining in which sense they were using the term.

(i) If we consider Christianity first in regard to its SPIRIT, it is (1) a *life*, which has grown out of (2) a *faith*.

(ii) But we may consider it also as a RELIGION, that is a practice, including (1) personal acts and feelings, but including also (2) certain common acts such as the forms of worship and the ministrations on which such common acts rest. Let us consider these separately.

I. THE CHRISTIAN SPIRIT.

(1) *The Christian Life.* In itself the Christian life is nothing more than the life of faith in God, and of the love which springs from faith. Its character is laid down for us in the Gospels, emphasised in S. Paul's writings, realised in our own experience,—the paradoxical richness of its simplicity; the positive clear-cut force which rises out of the apparent negatives of humility, self-suppression, self-forgetfulness; the fearless strength and courage of its self-distrust; the effortless attainment of difficult virtues merely from the consciousness of God's nearness. We know the workings, and we can in some degree justify the law of love, since man is made for God, yet by this very reason no pyschology, no science of the human soul considered in itself, will offer an adequate formula by which the occurrence of such things can be predicted or explained. 'The Spirit breathes where He will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth.' We cannot even assert that the Christian life is peculiar to Christians. Mohammedanism seems a very hard master, yet there are men under

it who stand out above it with a wondrous gentleness. Buddhism may be a sterile negation, and yet we may find in Buddhism men full of considerate service.

(2) *The Christian Faith.* In judging therefore of individuals we can only say that God knows His own, that His ways are past our finding out, and that we rejoice it should be so. Although, therefore, we cannot limit God even by ways of His own appointment, it yet remains that God sent His Only Begotten Son into the world to be the one true Way, open to all men, not merely to those of exceptional character or attainment, through Whom we might come to faith in God through knowledge, and to God Himself in power.

First, we come through Christ to the knowledge of God. All nations have had their ideas about God, the maker of the universe as we know it, the Ruler of men as we live among them, and those ideas of necessity differed according to all the differences of intellectual history and temperament. We may admit that many heathen ideas have been full of truth and deep suggestion, though many are exceedingly foolish and puerile, not a few are evil and horrible. It could not well be otherwise, for the natural universe from which men have drawn their ideas, and the human mind with which they draw them, contain much apparently evil as well as good.

The claim of Christianity is unique ; it is a claim to finality, not however because Christ revealed to us some ideas which were better and truer than other ideas, for, since all human ideas are finite and imperfect, in ideas as such there can be no finality. Christianity is final because the incarnation of Christ is the manifestation of God Himself, concerning Whom our ideas are formed, so that it is said ' I and the Father are One,' and ' He

that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.' The Apostles in like manner are not merely thinkers with a teaching of their own to declare ; they are first of all witnesses of that which they saw and heard and their hands handled concerning the WORD of Life (1 S. John i. 1).

It is this manifestation which has lifted us out of the darkness of our own abstractions, out of making God according to the devices and desires, the reasonings and inclinations, of our own hearts, into the clear light and true knowledge of God. Differences of apprehension still remain in regard to this manifestation, but just so far as we look away from ourselves and our apprehension to Christ Who is apprehended, so growing in the knowledge of Him we grow in fellowship one with another. While the seed of division is in us, our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son.

Secondly, therefore, through Christ we are brought not only to the knowledge of God, but into union with Him. The incarnation is much more than a manifestation of God to the human mind ; it is the coming of God in power. The LOGOS of God has done more than veil Himself in flesh that He might be seen and heard of men. He has taken the human nature into the unity of His Person, that men might be in Him joined to God. As we are no longer left dependent on the wisdom of human thought, so we are no longer left dependent on the strength and righteousness of our own action. Our faith rests not on what we think but on what Christ is ; our hope, not subjectively on what we are, but objectively on what He has done. It is of the Son of God that our ignorance comes to learn, and our weakness comes to participate.

It is this which makes Christianity missionary, in-

tolerant with the intolerance of a Gospel, of a 'good news' of assured knowledge and positive truth, aggressive because driven forward by a love which is intolerant of barriers. Is religion meant to be ultimately the means of union among men, or the central expression of their hopeless division? If it is so effective in dividing, must it not be equally effective in uniting? Certainly, Christianity as one religion among many is one more division. But if Christianity be true at all in the sense in which Christians have ever held it, then by it we are not separating ourselves from the heathen, we are holding for them the hope of a unity, not only with us but with one another. We want to make a fellowship, not only between India and Europe, but between India and China, the Bengali and the African. Nor are we asserting some superiority of our own, as though by our own power or godliness we had made men walk. Our apprehension is very imperfect; we have nothing of our own but imperfection to offer. We ask other nations to learn of Christ, that we may learn of them, and to receive of Him that we may be enriched by their grace.

II. The Christian Religion.

The ideal of Christianity we have put forward is that commonly called Evangelicalism. The salvation it offers us is a salvation from self,—from trust in our own notions, in our own goodness and merits whether of character or of acts. The means of that salvation is the efficiency of the atoning death of Christ, through which, and not through anything that we do or are, we are reconciled and 'made at one' with God. This is the history of mankind,—to have sought for God and to have found ourselves, to have struggled to make

ourselves righteous and at peace with God, and to have found ourselves alienated from Him in our own self-seeking. To the failure and despair of men this Gospel is preached,—that God has found us and has given to us the righteousness which is in His Son.

This statement has its own difficulties and will not be accepted by everyone, but the controversies to which it gives rise are quite different to those with which we are now concerned. Churchmen and Non-Conformists alike must face the challenge raised by modern criticism in a multitude of ways. If we are forced to abandon what we have always believed as the evangelical faith in Christ, there will be no very important difference left between us. So far as we both continue to maintain that faith, our difference lies in regard to the religion or practice which belongs to it. For our own part, as Churchmen, our only justification for maintaining and even urging our own view, is that we believe it to be necessary to the consistent maintenance of Evangelicalism.

By 'religion' we mean all those activities which result from our consciousness of God and are addressed to Him. The word may therefore be applied in a very wide sense. Under activities we must include not only actions, things done or said, but also the feelings which accompany them. Again, all we do, our common work, study, play, rest as well as labour, fun not less than seriousness, may by the direction of intention become a religious act. It is indeed our ideal that everything should thus be an act of worship, and our religion be identical with the whole Christian life.

In the special sense of the word, we mean by 'religion' those acts, notably of prayer, praise, and meditation, which are necessarily, exclusively, directly,

concerned with the relation of the soul to God, in that they have no other meaning or value.

We have then two ways in which the soul expresses that which is within her of God. The first is often called ' religion in the daily life,' but I do not like the phrase. I should prefer to call it ' the religion *of* daily life,' for, as I have said, we do not want to treat religion as one thing influencing our daily life which is another. We want to make that life itself a religion and act of worship. I might call the second ' the religion of prayer,' but then it includes a great deal which is not ' prayer,' at least in the narrower sense. If I may without offence borrow a scholastic method, merely for the sake of clearness, I will call the religion of daily-life, ' effective religion,' and religion in the special sense, ' formal religion.'

This ' effective religion ' is what S. James speaks of as ' true religion and undefiled before God and the Father ' (S. James i. 27) : it is the final fruit to which everything leads up. Yet in spite of our own dislike to the phrase we cannot afford to neglect the vital importance of ' formal ' religion. I chose the word *formal* somewhat deliberately, because the natural irritation we feel at ' forms ' is a danger to us. No doubt formalism is an evil, and bondage to forms is a weakness. On the other hand, we all know people who take a pride in being rough and blunt in their manners. Many of them are really good people, yet their contempt for forms is also a weakness, the mark of a self-will and self-assertion which is the opposite of love.

We must learn to use forms without abusing them. We abuse forms whenever we exalt them into something good of themselves, whenever we give them an exclusive sphere of their own. We use them rightly

when we use them as an education, a necessary discipline, as the means and as the stay of what is higher. The forms of language are given us for the expression of true and right thought. It is an all too common abuse of language to allow ourselves to be captivated by mere style, yet a careless indifference to style is only pride.

This is as true in religion as in everything else. We are not Christians because, like the Pharisees, we say many prayers, but we shall be very poor Christians if we don't, and we shall be very bad Christians if we think ourselves above such things. We may make the holiness of our religion an excuse for treating the rest of life as profane, but if we say that all things are equally holy, that Sunday is as all days, and the Bible as all books, and Jesus Christ like other men, we shall find that we have not gained a deeper consciousness of the sanctity of our time, our literature, our fellow-men. We shall have lost all sense of sanctity and reverence for anything. Religion is not the one holy thing in life, but it is that which God has given us as the means and witness of the sanctification of all.

How it operates in this way is sufficiently clear. I said that it was the peculiarity of the special or formal religion that it had no value except in relation to God. In all our miscellaneous activity, social or individual, in all we seek to do for others or for ourselves, it is easy enough to say that we are seeking God's glory and that we labour in dependence on His grace, but while actually engaged upon it, the work stands before us immediately through our own choice and is in process of achievement through our own energy. It is for the most part only when, laying it aside, we bring before God in prayer and confession the emptiness of

our perplexity and weakness, that the religious phraseology recovers a reality which the self-absorbing strenuousness of necessary activity will not easily again take from us. By the recurrence of its acts our formal religion disciplines the mind into the recollection of habit.

Religion and Faith. We have considered the two sides of religion ; we had better now give a moment's thought to the relation between them and faith. I called ' effective ' religion the fruit of Christianity ; I think we might call faith its source or root. ' Formal ' religion would then be the sap which nourishes and develops the fruit from the root power.

An analogy is not an argument, but it may serve to express the result of the position I have given before. Christianity is primarily a faith, for it bids us look first to God and what He does. The religion is secondary, in the sense of derivative, for it is the response we make to the guidance and grace God gives us. This is especially and peculiarly true of formal religion, which constitutes always, both for Christians and heathens, the expression of belief.

Probably some will contend that my analogy exaggerates the importance of the formal practices of religion which are not the only means by which the root-faith can reach outwards to our life. I have already willingly admitted as much, but I do not think anyone will deny that religious practices do exert a very powerful influence of the kind described, and that it is proportionately important that they should express our faith rightly to us. It is possible to maintain a true faith with a very defective expression. There are people who for a long time combine a sincere love for God with great moral weakness. This is quite common

among children. It is also possible to lead a true life in spite of confused theories and false belief, and this is quite common among people of a special spiritual capacity, but such want of consistency is at best a precarious and unstable condition. It always involves loss of power and very often results in complete disaster.

There are certain psychological reasons always at work blinding us to the dangers of our own inconsistency. Our conscious ideals are so vividly before us that we hardly realise the steady moulding force which a practice has upon our subconsciousness. We never think of the difference between the meaning of our actions and the meaning we mean them to have. It irritates us even to be reminded that there can be a difference between the actual motive from which an act springs and to which it belongs, and the ideal motive by which we explain it to ourselves. Of course we can see this well enough in other people. We know how hard it is for them to get past the ingenious unreality of their asseverations, or to face the inconsistencies which are so harmful to character. They know so well that bad temper and self-pleasing are wrong, therefore they cannot imagine that they themselves are cross and selfish. When they are so keenly alive to the ideal of self-sacrifice, they think it unjust and insulting to suggest that they are mainly busy in making themselves comfortable.

This confusion reaches its climax in religion. We all know quite well what we ought to believe, therefore we entirely refuse to consider even the possibility that our accustomed practices are entirely out of accord with those beliefs. The pagan makes offerings to his idol, decorates it, ill-treats it if things go wrong with him,

but emphatically denies that he ever supposed the stone was god. Apparently there never was such a thing as idolatry. The polytheist prays now to this god, now to that, by different names and with different forms, and positively asserts that of course God is one. We can see it all so well in those for whose doings we are not responsible ; we cannot see it in ourselves just where we are responsible. 'Are we not Christians, and do we not know that idolatry is an evil ? How then can it be suggested that any part of our practice is in principle idolatrous ? Are we not well aware of the dangers of emotionalism ? No one therefore should say that our religion is emotional. Christianity is a faith in Christ. We do believe in Him and in His power. Therefore it is impossible that we should be trusting in ourselves and in our own states.'

If we value sincerity, we must be prepared to be critical with ourselves, as men who know how easily false principles can creep in amongst the highest purposes, doing all the more damage because of the specious disguise which prevents our recognising them. If truth-acting is no less important than truth-telling, we must learn to recognise the danger of these easy-going assumptions.

It is not merely the vividness of the conscious perception of our principles, nor merely the meanness of our self-complacency, which makes it so much easier to see inconsistencies of practice in other people. Our minds are always being led astray by the fallacy of particular instances. It may very well happen that a man's own faith or that of his immediate friends really is being very little affected by its one-sided expression, and the more clear-sighted and earnest a man is, the harder it may be for him to see that anything has gone

wrong. Nevertheless the logic of a system works out its own consequences visibly enough, if we look for them over a broad enough area and for a sufficient space of time ; and this we are all the more bound to do, since it is the general effect on common men, rather than the possibilities of the spiritually exceptional, with which we are concerned.

Before we try to apply this to our Christian religion, let us consider by contrast what expression is implied in heathen custom. Wherever, as commonly among the heathen, the idea of God is too vague and abstract to bear the weight of personal religion, men take refuge in the comparative definiteness of a traditional observance, which then becomes meaningless, formal in the worst sense. Its formality is the perfectly correct expression of their belief that there is a God and that He must stand in some relation to men. Its meaninglessness is the no less correct expression of their recognition that no one can so reach to Him as to declare what He is or what the relation is.

In the Christian order personal religion can develop without fear of losing itself in mere dreams or individual imaginings just so long as it is based upon the assured revelation of God in Christ Jesus, set forth visibly and in power to all mankind. This personal development based upon the revelation and act of Christ shows us the safe and harmonious co-operation of those two distinct principles which, towards the close of the last chapter, I called the ' key of hope.'

If then our Christian religion is on its ' formal ' side to be of one piece with its own faith, it must also find room for the co-operation not of one, but of two concurrent principles. (*a*) It must present to us the work of Christ ; and it must contain (*b*) our own response to

that work. These, though different, are necessary to one another, and they must be set before us in their proper relation,—the human activity being recognised in its dependence upon divine gift. Each side calls for a little consideration.

(*a*) Let us ask first what is meant by a presentation of Christ's work. That work was the redemption of mankind. It is of its very essence that it was completed by the one, full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, which man can neither add to nor repeat. What is there then which calls for a presentation or a representation ?

Do we not however see that for multitudes of men in heathen lands the sacrifice of Christ is as though it had never been ? Our belated and half-hearted consciousness is just beginning to awake to the duty laid on us of helping to bring men out of their isolating darkness into the redeemed humanity, and what is our mission work but a presenting to them of the Cross of Christ ?

Nor are things at all different with ourselves. The sacrifice of Christ as perfect is eternal, but we are born in time. We were saved by Christ's death on Calvary ; we have been brought into that salvation by conversion and obedience, by repentance and baptism. But we are not only born in time, we are not only re-born or regenerated in time, we change with time. Day by day we wake up as with a new mind in a new world to new deeds which call for fresh help. We do not want a new sacrifice, we do need that it should be renewed in us.

If then the sacrifice of Christ is still to mean anything, it must be more than a past event, it must be and is a living force through its capacity of being individualised to individual men, and daily renewed in application

to each man. This is the law by which the eternal manifests itself and is realised in time. Nothing adds to the perfect, but thus the perfect fulfils itself in the imperfect.

It is the special sphere of Christian religion to provide this renewal and fulfilment in human life, and each such fulfilment is an *anamnesis* or memorial, just as it re-presents the historic fact of Christ's death. Yet it is not a mere reminiscence of something bye-gone, now only capable of being mentally realised in imagination. That which is still living and effective for all is presented in its continuous power.

This presentation therefore would be the essentially 'common' side of worship. Whatever is of our own, whatever is subjective, our thoughts, memories, feelings, are different in each person; they change even in the same person in some degree with the changes in his life. It is always by the objective fact itself that we are brought out of individualism into fellowship. It is just the fact which remains the same, fixed and unchangeable, whether we 'discern' it or not, however differently we realise it. It did not happen because we admit it, nor does it cease to be true if we choose to deny it.

(*b*) The second side of our religious practice is the response we make to Christ's work, and this is the personal side, proceeding from the gift of the Spirit, manifesting the diversity of His operation among men, Who moves each to his own appreciation, and therefore to his own response, the diversity of the Spirit's operation being manifested according to all the variety of character and temperament.

Both sides of the idea are represented to us in the Vision of the Heavenly City, which lying four-square is

straitly marked out with the great apostolic wall of twelve foundations, yet three gates, though guarded, stand open on each side. Into its unity all nations bring each their own diverse glory and honour.

I have ventured to emphasise these two aspects, for while the evangelical faith requires and implies both, it is just the unity of their necessary inter-dependence which our religious practice has torn asunder. If I may apply this to the question before us, anticipating what I must show more fully hereafter, has not the Church been strong so far as she has held fast to the sacramental forms which witness and belong to the gifts of Christ? Has it not been the strength of Non-Conformity that it has maintained and developed the witness of the personal gifts of the Holy Spirit?

The unity we long for is a unity which shall combine both sides. We shrink from a union which acquiesces in their separation. Must we for that reason lose the sympathy of our brethren? Even if we Churchmen had only ourselves to think of we could not be content. We are not half as conscious as we ought to be, and yet we are conscious, how much we are losing by disunion, how inadequate is our grasp of the richness of faith, how much our Church life needs to be kindled by a new fervour. But, little as we like to mingle criticism of others with confession of our own weakness, it seems to us no less clear that others,—indeed that all,—are in need of the gifts which God has given to us. However feeble and half-hearted our own use of them may be, we cannot admit that these gifts are merely things serviceable to us with which others can well dispense.

CHAPTER III.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

Of what I have tried to say this is perhaps the sum. Our life is built out of the inter-operation of two principles, which I may call truth and apprehension. The truth is the common factor which is the same for all; apprehensions of the truth are personal, and being partial are endlessly varied. If we apply this to the Christian life, the incarnation and redemption represent the common factor on which a very varied development follows. It is in the completeness and adequacy of its double aspect that Christianity differs from heathenism. Among the heathen to whom the revelation of Christ has not come, the whole universe lies open as a basis for religious selection, and apprehension becomes an unchecked movement. There can be no true development or progress, because there is no certain conception of a religious truth to be apprehended or developed. To Christianity the distinction of the two parts is vital, but it is a distinction and not a separation, for the two are brought into unity. Rooted in Christ, the life grows freely outwards.

This is the whole text of all I am trying to say. In applying it first to the question of the Church, we come within the controversial area, and this part of our subject in particular is involved in many difficulties. We

who call ourselves ' the Church ' have by so doing unchurched all other bodies. At the same time, if we are to admit that all other religious bodies are equally churches, we must give up our contention of the essential unity of the Church. We shall have opened the door to those ideals of co-operation and federation which seem to us as ideals so unsatisfactory and inadequate.

Here then we are apparently confronted with an irreconcilable contradiction at the very start. Personally I do not believe that the difference is at all irreconcilable, but I am quite sure that if we begin by discussing that question—' Which is the Church ? '—we shall find ourselves lost in an interminable confusion. Certainly we have been engaged on a very long controversy over just this point, if after it all the question has made no progress whatever, is not that sufficient to prove that we have not reached the central difficulty ? We are arguing what is the proper organisation or system for doing something, or authorised to do it, and we argue in circles without ever touching one another, because we have never made up our minds what is the thing the organisation is to do, what is its significance, what is implied in it, why it requires an authorisation.

For some reasons I should prefer to leave the question of the Church to my Second Part, where I hope to deal with it more fully, and to show why I think our difference is not so irreconcilable, and the question—' Which is the Church ? ' is not so important as they appear to be, for the real difference lies in a quite other direction. Since, however, we are concerned altogether with a question of unity, I must explain what we Churchmen mean by it. I do not suppose that Non-Conformists

will altogether agree with what I have to say, but as I am dealing rather with the principles which should be kept in mind than with the forms in which they must be realised, I do not think they will greatly differ.

I want to emphasise that we are seeking a unity rather than a union, and the difference is of great importance. By a 'unity' we mean a single body, having different organs, and yet filled and controlled with one life. By a 'union' we mean a mutual relation established between different bodies, each of which retains its own independence. Thus, the states of Europe form by treaties and international law a union, capable of common action for certain definite purposes. The 'States' of North America on the other hand, while for certain purposes distinct, yet are 'united,' have a unity, much deeper, more 'spiritual,' than their difference. They form one country.

The instances I have used may be of a somewhat rough type, and I have no interest in pressing them too far, but they have their own lesson. We are talking of spiritual things, and of spiritual ideas and spiritual principles in a common spiritual life. The material organisation of administrative and legislative government has grown from the spiritual life, and grown with it, constitutes a part of its expression.

In considering the Church system, the unity of its organisation, the necessity of its system, the form that it should take, are the points most present to our consciousness. We may grant that we have come, or many of us have come, to recognise that some kind of unity is required, but beyond that point we are hopelessly at variance. The true centre of Christianity, however, is not organisation, but worship. The Church, therefore, is primarily an organisation *for* worship, and

it is the nature of this supreme act which must determine our ideas of organisation.

My main business in the First Part is then to explain the Church conception of worship. I do not say that the Church conception is the only right one ; I do urge that it is one of great spiritual importance for which a place must be found in the true Christian life. We will consider afterwards what room is left, or ought to be left, for the organisation of other principles or conceptions of worship. I must first speak, however, of the necessity, value, importance, place of system and organisation. Does worship belong to the 'we' or to the 'I,' to the organisation, that is, the community, or to the individuals ? What is the relation between the two ?

If in our ethical study we try to construct a consistent theory of human conduct, we find ourselves confronted by this difficulty—to ourselves we seem to be individuals, living our own lives, thinking our thoughts, masters of our own acts, and the 'Community' is merely a name for an aggregate of other individuals similarly situated. Nevertheless, nothing is more certain than that to the community we owe both the fact and the possibility of maintaining our individual existence. This is not only true of our material existence. To the intercourse which the community provides we owe that very intellectual development, the growth of intelligence, which is creating and intensifying the sense of individualism.

Further, it should be noted, that we owe the greater part of all this growth to the community as such. No doubt we owe a great deal also to particular members of the community, but what we receive from individuals is incidental and occasional. For that reason

it impresses itself upon our imagination and is not readily forgotten. What we owe to the community as a whole order of relations forms the constant and permanent substance of our life, therefore we take it for granted and hardly think anything about it. We know how much some stirring sermon or serious talk has meant in our lives; it seldom occurs to us how much the mere fact of a Church with its fixed hours of service is moulding and forming our minds.

This unconsciousness of the real influence and importance of the community intensifies, but it does not create, the dissonance between the advantage and perfecting of the community and those of the individual, which cannot be identified merely by putting stress on the *true* and *real* advantage of the individual. Is it possible to maintain that self-sacrifice is always really and in the highest sense for the good of him who sacrifices himself? If it is, can the act really and in the highest sense be a self-sacrifice?

In plain fact, the moment I set the community before me as an object for whose good I will work, I have separated myself from it. I have so far ceased to regard myself as a member sharing in its good. I have made myself the judge of what its good shall be, and asserted my individuality as the prior factor on which it is dependent. Here we may see something of the significance of the difference between union and unity. To our self-conscious judgments we are individuals who make union with one another as we co-operate in common plans and efforts for mutual assistance. The true community, however, is the primary unity from which we receive, and this primary unity cannot be of our making; it is of God.

We can perhaps follow this better in an instance I

have already used, which is easier to understand just because it goes less deep into the vital truth of life. As a nation we are held together by a common system, having a common history, a common life, common ideals. We do not belong to it by a choice of our own, nor can we quite easily cease to belong to it by choice. It is easy enough, no doubt, to be a bad Englishman or a traitor, but not so easy to cease to be an Englishman. We belong to England because we have been born to a share in a common Divine purpose. However far back we look we shall never find such a choice being made. In the very earliest stages the national idea or the national consciousness is at its feeblest, in a later stage it has grown stronger; but when at its feeblest it is a consciousness, it is a faith, at its strongest, it is only a strong consciousness, and a more over-mastering faith, in something which already exists.

Our faith in our country is therefore a faith in its vocation. It is in this respect altogether different from our faith in the Primrose League, the Liberal Five Hundred, or the Midland Railway Company, which are our own, and which represent just the sum of such combined effort and power as we put into them. A nation is a different thing. Our material self-seeking and intellectual self-assertion, our greed and envy, contempt and recrimination, weaken it and may bring about its destruction. Our patriotism, agreement and sympathy with one another, willingness to understand, efficient work and ready service, will be for its strength and development. But all these activities for good or evil are the results of our faith or lack of faith. They also strengthen or weaken the faith, but they are not the causes of faith and still less the causes of the nation. Our faith similarly pre-supposes the country. It is in

the nature of things impossible that faith should create its own object.

The nation is then a trinity: first, that which God does; next, faith by which man accepts; lastly, works by which man fulfils. We must not divide these elements, for all are necessary to the very substance, reality, being of a nation; mutually re-acting, they are all involved in everything we do. Yet we must not confuse them, nor lose sight of the order of their priority. Possibly some may think that I am not justified in making God the author of a national political existence. I do not altogether agree with them. We cannot put political growth outside the sphere of God's operation and providence; and so long as we allow that, my immediate point remains—wherever we have to consider God's action, there we must keep before our minds this trinity of elements in their right order.

The objection made has, however, a certain importance. I admit that in political matters there is so much which is human that the non-religious student has a certain excuse for treating them by purely scientific method as the outcome of political forces. We are concerned with the Church as a Christian religious society, and it is the very essence of the Christian religion that we can see at once in Christ that which is of God, in order that what is there made plain to our learning may be afterwards applied in fields where God's action is only 'immanent,' can only be seen in the general working of things. We believe God to be the author of the nation, because we know He is the author of the Church.

We look to Christ, then, as the manifestation of God made Man in order that we may see the Divine ideal of manhood; so also we look to God's Church to see

the Divine ideal of a human society. If Christianity has any light to throw on this strange and perplexing dissonance between the individual and the community, between that essential unity from which we come and those unions which are after all our own, if Christianity can show us any way of reconciling or harmonising a difference which penetrates our life so deeply, it is in the Church that it must be found.

What I am urging is therefore that according to the law of human life the God-made unity is the prior ground out of which the individual grows ; from the individual come unions of individuals, for the furtherance of special purposes or ideas apprehended by individuals. This individuality, however, and these unions of individuals are not substitutes for that prior unity. They must be recognised as activities within it. It is to the prior and more general unity that they, as particulars, must be referred, just as all our doings, whether of persons, of parties, of societies for the furtherance of some ideal, are parts of a whole national life. I must then treat of the Church as the standard religious type of what I am calling a Prior Unity, to which all other individuals and unions are related.

When our Lord Jesus Christ first preached to men, it was that the Kingdom of God was at hand—it was of a Kingdom He Himself would establish, which His hearers would recognise, might enter or refuse to enter, but which was certainly not to be made by them. To Pilate He asserted His claim to be a King ; that was the end for which He had come. He died with the title of a King above His head.

What sort of a Kingdom would He establish ? It was a Kingdom not of this world. It was ' a Kingdom within you.' Nevertheless, like all things spiritual, it

would have its actualisation, its embodiment or presentation among men, as all things eternal must have which we can count as real.

S. Luke, writing his history of the Acts of the Apostles, reminds his readers of his former account of all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach. The doings of which he has to tell them now are all very actual indeed. Are they not the fulfilment of Christ's promise, 'Lo, I am with you always'? The Churches to which S. Paul writes are very real societies of very real—it would appear of very commonplace—people, though he takes them to be the sign of the operation of God's Spirit.

The law of the relation between this presentation or actual embodiment and the eternal principle which it sets forth, we shall find in our Lord's great prayer for unity given in S. John's Gospel. 'That they may be one as we are one. . . . As Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us' (xvii. 11-12). The mystery that lies under the unity of the Church is nothing else than the unity of the Godhead, the unity of the Trinity. It is not primarily a unity of opinions, for this is but the unity of a party; nor merely of co-operation, for this is only the unity of a commercial partnership. It is a unity of life, of organic relation, of vital function.

There are here two main points on which I want to insist: (1) the distinction between the unity which is God-made and that which is man-made; (2) the necessity of actuality, reality, materiality, in the nature of this Church unity. Both of these are points on which I know many will differ. I put them as crudely, even as offensively, as possible, much more crudely than I mean them, in order that we may get the whole force

of whatever difference there may be. I want now to explain them more carefully. I do not suppose I shall, nor do I want to, explain the difference away, but I do hope that when others realise exactly what we are contending for, they will appreciate its importance.

(1) That there are certain societies which are distinctively God-made and others which are distinctively man-made, I think we shall all admit. No one would put a commercial firm quite on the level of a family or a Church. What exactly is the distinction? Should we not say that whatever we make is a partnership; it has just so much of skill and wisdom as we put into it. For that reason, however useful, it cannot be an object of faith or of worship. If we devote ourselves and bow down to that which our fingers have made and our brains devised, as though it were something greater than ourselves, capable of bringing us help, we are committing idolatry.

But the question is very complex. As Christians we must believe that all good whatever is of God. Personally, I hold to the Augustinian principle that 'man has nothing of his own—unless perchance sin.' If we could not feel that God was leading us to a business partnership, we have no right to join it. But if so, what becomes of our distinction? Must we not conclude that there is no real distinction, but only a difference of degree?

If so, then our question becomes not only complex, but confused, for nothing is so confusing as mere questions of less and more. And there are people who deny our distinction, maintaining that, since the Holy Spirit dwells in us and guides us, therefore what we do is done by God. From every point of view this is a question of supreme importance with which we must

grapple. It will meet us in this enquiry again and again, but its importance is by no means limited to our immediate subjects.

I quite admit the force, and even to a certain point the correctness, of the argument. There is nothing good which can be purely human; the phrase 'man-made' cannot therefore be used strictly. But can it be used distinctively? If there is no real distinction —except in degree—between what God does and what man does, then I say that all real religion is at an end. The name of God becomes a phrase for certain 'degrees' of man's actions and it has no distinct meaning at all.

We must begin therefore by admitting that in all man does there is an element of divine guidance. But we have learnt to realise that we cannot confine this Divine guidance to Christian people. God gave of His Spirit to heathen philosophers, poets, sculptors. To Him they also owe whatever was right and true in their thoughts of God, and all that was best in the beauty of its expression. Yet the primary distinction remains just the same. However good, noble or beautiful, however God-given, these thoughts, carvings, ideas were not God Himself; they were only individual expressions. The distinction reveals itself under the test of worship. The moment the heathen bowed before that which was contained within himself, or proceeded from himself—even if it were that which he had received of God, even if it were so much of God's grace—it was an act of idolatry.

That, as a matter of plain fact, I do not see how we can help admitting, and the ground of it lies here. It is as true of Christians as heathens, of the greatest saints as well as of the most ordinary men and women, that that which is within us, whencesoever it may come,

is limited by our limitation, qualified by our imperfection. The true object of our worship, and therefore of our faith, must be something altogether greater than ourselves. It must be God Himself, and something that is of God's own doing, of His purpose, power, working, as these are in Himself, not according to the degree in which we have received them. If we believe in England, it is not in just what Englishmen are, not even in that grace which Englishmen have already received, but in what God means for England. With the Church, as with our country, our faith is in what God has made for it, not in what men have made of it. We believe in it, because we believe that what God has thus made will overcome what man has done.

I urge, therefore, first, that if the unity we seek is to be a Gospel, or any part of a Gospel, it must come to us as 'news,' as something which is not of ourselves, but which lifts us above ourselves. It must not be the reflection or expression of ideas we already have; it must in some way effectively present, witness, provide the means of realising the revelation of God, the operation of His power.

(2) From this it follows, secondly, that it must be a visible unity, an organised body, a Church or institution of some kind. I know that very many will dissent strongly from this conclusion, but I ask them to face the question seriously. 'An invisible Church composed of all good people, of all who love Jesus Christ in sincerity.' Is this really more than an empty phrase? I fully admit that there are many good people who do not belong to any religious body, nor do I suggest that their goodness is inoperative. I only ask, if they are not a body—but only a number—and if they do not form part of a body, why should we talk of them as

if they did? We can speak of 'the great unity of London bricklayers,' because the London bricklayers have a Union. But what would be meant by speaking of 'the great unity of London sempstresses'? It is one of the difficulties of social reform that London sempstresses have no such unity. No one knows even who they are, who should be counted as a sempstress and who not. 'There are many good people known and unknown.' That I fully grant, but what is gained, what valid meaning is added, by calling them 'an invisible Church'? The phrase does suggest that actual union among them is a quite unimportant matter. I am quite willing to admit that their goodness is more important, but that experience of religious life which leads us to look for reunion is of itself proclaiming that disunion is a weakness. By using language implying that the disunion does not exist, we suggest that it does not matter whether they are united or not.

The principle of a visible Church stands in harmony with the visible Incarnation concerning which it is written 'we *beheld* His glory.' If a unity of mere agreement is parallel only to a Tritheistic Godhead, an invisible unity corresponds to the meaningless rhetoric of Pantheism.

The greatest difficulty felt in a hearty acceptance of the Church on earth as a visible organisation lies in our dread of losing what is spiritual under the dead-weight of a merely material system. No careful student of history and no observer of our own times can doubt that that is a very real and pressing danger. The readiness to be content with formal membership and the correct performance of formal duties, the habit of taking lists of membership and classes, the weight of

subscriptions and the magnificence of buildings, as signs of spiritual vitality, or perhaps, worst of all, the craving to exercise political power as an equivalent, a proof or a means of spiritual influence, are exactly parallel to the tendency to measure the greatness of England by the mileage of its Empire, the census of its population or the estimates of its capital.

We must not forget, however, that the spiritual is no less endangered by our readiness to identify it with the unreal, to suppose that it can remain, or even consist, in a vague sentiment, indifferent to all practical manifestations. The spiritual is not the opposite of the material, but its proper life. ' There is nothing material which is not also spiritual, nor anything spiritual which is not realised in the material.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHURCH SACRAMENTS.

I HAVE spoken now in a general way of what underlies our view of ' the Church,' that is, of the idea of a unity or whole to which the individual is related. I promised that I would speak next of the Church view of Sacraments, which I will also treat in this chapter somewhat generally. These two questions of Church Order and Church Sacraments have a close connection with the two Christian principles of Revelation and Atonement.

The two principles which I gave as the essence of our Christian faith are that first it has turned our thoughts away from merely self-formed ideas to contemplate the Revelation of God in Christ ; secondly, in relation to our life it bids us put our trust, not in the virtues, righteousness, actions, which we possess or perform, but in what Christ has done for us. At Bethlehem God took all humanity to Himself ; on Calvary He gave Himself for all mankind, thus drawing the whole race of man into oneness with the Father and the Son. But that which Christ did for us is that which He now does in us. As in the Church we see how there is for the individual a true sphere in a common calling or purpose of God ; so in the sacraments Christ draws the individuals one by one, making them in baptism by His act to be His members, and then feeding them day by

day with that one gift of God which is the communion of Himself, of His own body and His own blood.

I want to show how throughout this statement, which I have put very shortly, even if some think it complex, there is but one consistent idea running. We may distinguish between the Incarnation and the Atonement, Revelation and Redemption, but the Gospel is not divided. God redeemed Humanity because He had taken it, and He took it that He might redeem it. To the redeemed God is made known, and He is made known because He redeemed. So also Order and Sacraments are one, for it is One Will of God working outwards to men and human society, which works by drawing men in to God. It is thus that Christianity reconciles the dissonance of life, the antagonism between the individual and the whole, for though in ourselves we are separated personalities, in God the two are one.

The unity made in the Gospel between the two ideas of knowledge and power is then repeated in the sacramental presentation. What is the relation between the Gospel and the sacraments ?

The sacraments were anciently called symbols, but, as Professor Harnack tells us, the word has somewhat changed its meaning. It stood at first for that outward form by which an act was validly performed, the legal ' deed ' by which ownership, authority or dignity is conferred. In the modern sense it is used for the outward trappings which merely proclaim what is already and by other means possessed, as the crown is the symbol of the king, though he is no less the king if no coronation has taken place.

To take the sacraments purely as symbols in the modern sense, that is, to regard them only as material

signs proclaiming a subjective or spiritual state which already exists independently of them, and to which they contribute nothing, seems to us to invert the Christian order of priority. 'That is not first which is spiritual but that which is natural.' The outward is always the ground of the inward. In common life it is from what is seen, heard, felt, that we come to thought and reflection; in the Christian life, the physical, objective presentation in Galilee, Capernaum, on Calvary, in the Upper Room, on Olivet, comes before the gift of the Spirit. By what suffered in the flesh, we live in the Spirit.

The difficulty of the sacraments is the offence of the cross, which to the Jew was a stumbling-block, for he sought acts of his own which might have merit. To the Greek it was foolishness, for virtue was the wisdom of the individual. All our human pride is in revolt against the idea that an external act, of which we are not the doers, can affect us. Yet the sacraments were instituted as the Passion was endured just for this reason, that we should learn to trust, as in what Christ did, so in what Christ gives. The subjective or personal part, by which we enter into or appreciate, follows what is done or given.

Baptism. These then are the principles of which I want, not merely to find illustrations, but to show the spiritual importance. That I may not seem to omit anything, I had better say a few words on the subject of Baptism.

The Christian life is that life in which we dwell in Christ and Christ in us, are one with Christ and Christ with us. This state is so far natural, since it is that for which our nature cries out. Yet in another sense it is not natural, but of grace, that is of gift. The

merely natural mind, the mind of the flesh, ' is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be ' (Rom. viii. 7). The natural mind is that which is self-regarding, for ' that which is born of the flesh is flesh,' so that ' except a man be born again—of water and spirit—he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'

By birth we mean the beginning of individual life; by life we very commonly mean the sum and course of all those activities—sights, hearing, knowledge, thought, movement—which go to make up the fact of living. Strictly speaking, however, life is rather the power which makes those activities possible. Without the activities life perishes, but life's uses and the power of life are nevertheless distinct. The uses presuppose the power.

When therefore our Lord commanded His Apostles to baptise, He gave baptism to be the sacrament of a birth, the symbol, the outward means, the effective presentment of the gift of life; of life, that is, taken strictly, a power, not the fulfilment to which it leads. 'As many as received Him, to them gave He *power* to become the sons of God.' The same order of priority holds in the spiritual as in the physical. We do not acquire sonship by love; we learn to love because we have been made sons.

Holy Communion. It has been a frequent subject of regret, it has been not seldom referred to as an instance of human perversity, that the mystery of this sacrament, ordained to be the means and symbol of unity among men, should have become the greatest cause of religious difference. But the complaint thus stated involves a very serious misunderstanding of the problem before us. Men differ, not because they are trying to know too much, but because they have not learnt

enough. God Himself is using difference to rouse us to the sense of how much more there is yet to come, to prevent us settling down to the easy sleep of indifference. If the differences become quarrels it is not because we hold truth with too firm a conviction, but because we resent the idea that there is anything more to be learnt. We do well to deplore difference and still more to deplore bitterness. But after all these are only symptoms.

If there is any truth in this view of the significance of difference—and I think few will deny that there is at least some—the more essential any question is, the greater the hold it takes on life, if men differ about anything the more they will differ about that and the more inevitably.

I have already pointed out how this applies to religion in general. We need not go to theologians and philosophers; our best witnesses are the practical politicians who are least interested in the subject. From at least the days of the Seleucidae and the Maccabæan revolt, they have shown their consciousness that religion was the most effective element in uniting and in dividing the people under them. The two effects were mutually involved.

What applies to religion in general applies equally to religious doctrines taken separately. The Doctrine of the Atonement is full of difficulties. Endless theories have been made about it. Even those who have made the theories would not pretend that any of them were adequate. In the Atonement is the answer of God to all the mysteries, the perplexities, the contradictions in human life. To understand it completely would be to have a complete understanding of everything. And the mystery of the Holy Communion is nothing more

than a showing forth of Christ's death in a relation to all men.

It seems a paradox to say that these things contain the answer to all the perplexities and yet that they are not intelligible. If we meant a verbal answer, certainly it would be a very stupid paradox, but I am speaking of a living answer. I might say that the answer to all our sociological problems lay in the family, but no one would understand me to mean that the family was a lucid scientific treatise. I should mean that those elements and principles which in our national life are so fragmentary, so disjointed, so incongruous, so hard to follow, are in the family harmonious, possible, reconciled in practice. The family at least *is* the solution, though we may be a long way off knowing either how to explain its answer in intellectual terms or how to use it practically to straighten out our difficulties.

Let us see what these ' problems of life ' are, and if they sound somewhat abstract, I give them in the belief that they lie at the root of all our most real troubles. Is there such a thing as a divine gift, or a ' divine grace,' or can everything in our moral and intellectual life be accounted for on the combined basis of environment, psychological development and free will? What precisely is the meaning and office of faith, submission, humility, self-surrender, by which that gift or grace is accepted? What is the value, place, effect, of human activity? What is the right order, sequence, or relation of these three factors—gift, faith, works? How do they act on one another, and how much reaction must we allow for?

Again, how is the individual related to the community, and in what order does each stand to God?

Does the community exist for the members or the members for the community? Are God's gifts received by the community and ministered to the members, or received by the members that they may be used as a gift to others? If both ways are employed, is there any distinction between them?

What are the relations of the spiritual and intellectual soul to the world? If the material hampers, can it also minister to, the soul? Is God the Lord of the spiritual only, or of the material also? Is God immanent in nature, that is, are we to find Him in the normal operation of its known forces; or is He transcendent, a something acting upon nature from without? Or is He both immanent and transcendent? Is He immanent or transcendent in the spiritual life, a force—or perhaps *the* force—of natural psychological movement, or again is He to be traced in the supernatural?

There are many ways of meeting these questions. We may assert that life is an essentially simple thing, and that its so-called problems are the nightmare invention of philosophers and theologians. So Tertullian once described them as coming from the wretched Aristotle—turned and twisted by philosophers and heretics. We may also, with an easy-going agnosticism, admit that they exist, and yet scoff at the futility of discussing what we have no means to answer.

If, however, we realise that these questions are being forced upon us in everyday life, then we ought to welcome anything which will help to make the end and purpose of that life more clear. The mere formulating of the questions, the mere statement of our confusions, is a first and necessary step forward. It is part of a criticism I have ventured to make elsewhere on the

method of modern theological study that, while wrestling not uselessly with documentary sources and historical origins, it has failed to recognise that 'orthodox doctrine' and ecclesiastical systems are not concerned merely with religious phenomena and ideas. They are offering us a solution of life as a whole. In consequence, our modern constructive theology shows for the most part a very superficial appreciation of the depth and subtlety of the questions involved.

CHAPTER V.

THE HOLY COMMUNION.

I TRUST that this general account of the sacramental system of the Church will justify my taking the Holy Communion and the place it holds in our religious life as the most central expression of whatever other differences exist between us. By careful examination here we can gain the clearest conception of the significance of our differences, and of what is implied in them.

The examination will be necessarily somewhat complicated. I am sure we do not understand one another very well; I am very doubtful if we understand ourselves at all too clearly. If there is any importance in what I have said above on the need of close consistency between faith and religious practice, I would urge then that it is of the greatest importance that we should work out our meaning steadily. For reunion mutual understanding is necessary, and for that understanding we must both make sure that we have a consistent position which can be understood. Further, I would urge that consistency of meaning is no less necessary for ourselves. In a matter which so much concerns the truth of Christianity we cannot afford, and we ought not to be content, to play about between two alternatives, using one so long as it suits us and then tacitly

passing over to another whenever the consequences of the first begin to grip us inconveniently.

In practice we differ very widely, though in faith many of us at least are still deeply at one. If we laid ourselves out to do it, I dare say we might find paper phrases to which we could all give a formal assent, while in fact we remain just where we were. But is that worth doing? Is it right? Would it not be really wiser to begin by trying to sharpen our differences? 'We have done that only too often.' Yes, we have done it in the name of strife and controversy, should we not be equally bold and frank in the name of love to one another, because of the faith we have in God's purpose? In this spirit, would there not be then a real hope of knowing where we stood?

In discussing our respective positions in the preceding chapters I called that for which I was contending the 'Church' position. I was conscious in doing so that I was implying a claim which would not be altogether admitted, yet since I was explaining an essentially 'institutional' view I thought the use of the term sufficiently clear and for descriptive purposes not unjustifiable. Now that I am coming to treat of the personal side, the term would be for several reasons misleading. To find descriptive names acceptable to both parties is in all controversies a difficult task. I have heard the two main views on this subject classified as Catholic and Evangelical. I should have no objection to the term Catholic, but I cannot without protest consent to let go the term Evangelical. I have no other motive for maintaining the 'Catholic' sacramental doctrine than that I believe it to be necessary to the consistency and stability of Evangelicalism. If

I may be allowed a purely personal remark, I say this as one who began life as an ardent evangelical in the sense in which that term might be applied to any Salvation Army Captain, and, however much more I have learnt since, I would not admit I have ever abandoned my belief. Possibly then I may be allowed to use the term 'Protestant' as that to which the fewest objections will be made.

What then may be called the 'Catholic' position, I may undertake to set out shortly. We believe that in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, Christ has provided for us in the fulfilment of His promise a representation of Himself, a true renewal to us day by day of the Bodily Presence of His spiritual Humanity, that which suffered and is now ascended and glorified, in order that we, partaking of the Humanity thus given, might enter into that union of the earthly and spiritual which was the redemption manifested in the Body of His Resurrection.

It is a much more difficult matter to undertake to state the position one is about to criticise. The recognised scientific method is by quoting and analysing the statements given in authorised documents and by authoritative writers. Although this looks the fairest method, I shrink from it. It is a very wearisome procedure both for the writer and the reader. Since the quotations can only be extracts, and after all one has to put an interpretation on them, the danger of misrepresentation is rather increased than diminished by the appearance of exactitude. The results are also apt to be misleading. Authoritative writers give us the more intellectual view of a system, as it can be best thought out, sometimes as it can be most easily defended, which is often a long way from its actual use.

Authorised documents, as essentially formal, do not give us any view of the movement of thought.

These objections are of especial weight in dealing with Non-Conformity. The leading writers of one body are not those of another, while I believe I am right in saying that modern Non-Conformity would claim to be essentially rather a spirit or movement than a formal position which can be adequately embodied in authorised documents.

It is therefore a distinctive spirit or motive which I have to consider. If in this way we try to describe the character of the two attitudes, it is usual to say that while the 'Catholic' looks especially to what is common, to the formal action, and ultimately to the definite doctrine or thought, the 'Protestant' tendency is to look primarily to the personal or individual, to the spiritual, and ultimately to what is felt. It is admitted on both sides that the distinction lies in a difference of proportion, or of relative importance. The Catholic does not deny the importance of the personal, nor the Protestant of that which is common. Moderate men on both sides would admit that these distinctions imply dangers in their own position as well as powers.

When we come to an explicit question like that of the Holy Communion, we find that our differences are far more serious, imply matters of much more spiritual importance, than the somewhat vague admissions given above would suggest. In trying to state the Protestant view, I am a little puzzled by finding two answers, advanced generally by different people, but even sometimes by the same people at different times, without any apparent sense that they are not quite consistent. I do not wish to make controversial point out of this. We Catholics have enough inconsistencies of our own,

and Non-Conformists lay less stress on formal consistency than we do. But I still hold that for either of us the lack of a clear conception, the readiness to take first one and then another view, is a real evil. For my immediate purpose, however, it is rather a convenience. The two answers move somewhat different issues which need separate consideration. I will take the first here, and leave the second to my next chapter.

What I might call 'the extreme Protestant view'—though it is by no means confined to those who in any offensive way would be called extreme Protestants,—regards the Holy Communion as 'symbolical' in the modern sense of the word. It is a token or reminder of what is given, but it is only the most effective means of that gift in so far as by its associations it is the most solemn act of prayer, meditation and worship. If there is a difference between communion and other religious acts, it is of degree and not of kind. The real key of the view is stated with extraordinary terseness and suggestiveness in the sentence: 'What a man brings to the communion, he takes from it.'

If anything I can say is to be of any use, I must avoid unfair statement of the opposed view. I have already admitted that this only represents one view, or perhaps one side. It may well be that I do not fully understand what is meant by it, but I want to emphasise what I hope presently to show more fully. I am not criticising Protestantism, still less Non-Conformity, but only certain elements which in truth seem to me not essential nor even consistent with the principles of either, but which are rather, like most negations, a source of weakness.

That the above statement does represent a very real side of the Protestant position I think I have better

evidence for believing than any string of quotations. I have explained elsewhere why I take religious usage as the most significant expression of the religious mind. Usage grows up in us and moulds our minds unconsciously. If we will reflect upon it, it thereby reveals to us how different the real influences in our life may be from those which our theories are inclined to allow. Again, usages are essentially 'common.' They reveal the outcome and the meaning of a system as it is understood by the mass of common people, rather than as it is explained by the learned.

Whatever similarity therefore may exist between the theories of different bodies of Christians, we must find some explanation or interpretation for this great and practical difference that, just so far as the Catholic view has been appreciated, the Holy Communion has been felt as the centre of its normal religious life, set forth day by day or week by week; amongst Non-Conformists and under the Protestant view, it is very occasional, and, if I am rightly informed, the modern tendency is to diminish the insistence on its necessity.

I am not merely anxious for controversial reasons to do full justice to Non-Conformists. I am exceedingly anxious for the cause of Christianity that we should gain a strictly accurate view both of the nature of our differences and of their importance It is quite possible that they are of small moment, but it is also possible that the differences may be growing out of and revealing very serious defects and inconsistencies on one side or on both which ought to be faced honestly. A better understanding of one another is desirable, but a true understanding of Christianity is vital. In the one case, to exaggerate our differences is foolish and mischievous; in the other, to minimise them may be disastrous.

I have put the two positions side by side and the difference between them is obvious. When, however, in a broad-minded way we look to the spirit or tendency of the systems, differences of theory or statement seem to melt away again. When we look at the practical differences of use, those tendencies begin to acquire a deeper significance, which is increased and confirmed by the reasons quite commonly given by Protestants for dissenting from the Catholic usage. I put these reasons in my own words, but I put them as strongly as I can.

'The more we concentrate our attention on the inward and spiritual life of the soul which is after all the vital element, and the more we realise the mystery of that personal devotion or self-surrender which constitutes the soul's true relation to God, the less easy it is to believe that it can be compassed by what is formal and material, by an act which—without any wish to be offensive—it is difficult not to call "quasi-magical." The act may be helpful. It may stimulate devotion; it provides an expression for its realisation, but it is the devotion which gives the act its whole value. And for this view there is some psychological justification. Do we observe, have we any ground for supposing, that real spiritual results do follow from the mere act?'

Alongside of this I would set an obvious Catholic reply. 'It is easy enough to call the act of communion formal, quasi-magical and ineffective. We have for it the scriptural authority of Christ's promise and command. We cannot tell whence the Spirit cometh and whither it goeth. It is absurd and profane to imagine that our psychological thumb can plot off the mysterious working of the Divine power in the human soul.'

I have put the Protestant position I hope fairly, and I think pointedly. For my own part I realise the extreme importance of its contentions. I ask Non-Conformists to consider very carefully the importance of what is implied in the particular Catholic argument just stated. I have the more right to do so, because putting it also in its most pointed form, I have not troubled to be fair at all. It is not a form which naturally appeals to me, nor which I think satisfactory. In dealing with any religious practice, whether it be sacraments or prayer or any other, though we cannot pretend to trace results exactly, we ought not to escape from the question of actual working by invoking authority and 'the unknowable.' Unquestionably the Protestant and Catholic arguments in this shape stand in irreconcilable antagonism. It is utterly useless to try to make a compromise between their conclusions. Both arguments and conclusions rest upon entirely different premisses. If we are to get any further it is the premisses we must study.

The outstanding feature of the Protestant position is its assertion of the purity and continuity of the spiritual life. We may trace this in all the three forms in which I have dealt with it. The Protestant view is centred on the spiritual life; its doctrine of the Holy Communion proclaims the dominance of the spiritual over the material; its argument insists that the mere act takes its value from the intention, purpose, feeling, which motive it, and protests against the inversion of that order. The outstanding feature of the Catholic position is very different. It asserts the vital importance of something done, which it would not admit was unspiritual, but which is at least external and independent of the spiritual state.

Certainly these premisses imply a very different view of the questions or factors to be dealt with, but does it follow that they are opposed? May it not be that these are two questions, and that we are each thinking of one when we very much need to think of both? If we realised that, might we not find that the arguments differed because they related to different spheres, and consequently the conclusions no longer clashed? Now is it not evident at this stage that 'the material act' upon the value of which the discussion turns has a quite different meaning in the two positions? The Protestant is talking of the value of an act which we perform; the Catholic is thinking of the value of something performed in us or for us.

This may seem a small point. I believe it leads directly to the heart of what is at stake, and that our confusion over it has involved us in a disastrous conflict just where we were in need of one another's help. I ask once more for patience and sympathetic consideration while urging what I think are the weaknesses of the Protestant position. I will be as frank as I can over our own weaknesses in my Second Part.

We are all to-day trembling on the edge of a humanitarian naturalism. It is not merely in the study that this question: 'Does the Name of God mean anything?' is dogging all our steps, twisting itself about our feet, staring at us out of the dark, freezing our heart, paralysing our movements, crushing us with the sense of an appalling loneliness, like the snow wraiths to one lost in a moorland storm. Of old time, when men were ready to believe anything a miracle, we imagine—though I doubt if we are altogether justified—(cf. 2 S. Peter iii. 4)—that the difficulty was far less acutely felt. In our own time, overwhelmed by the

sense of a uniform natural law, we have been half forced, half led, to the belief in God's immanence in all things, as their life and power, movement and force, and in the steadfastness of His will as the ground of their order. We might accept for ourselves the view of S. Ambrose : the earth stands ' not because it is in the middle, as suspended on an even balance, but it continues stable because the majesty of God constrains it by the law of His will ' (Hex. i. 6). As we have learnt to trace law also in our own mind-movements, we have learnt that there also are His operations. In these thoughts we try to take refuge.

All this is so far pure gain. But is this the whole ? Is there no element in nature other than a closed circle of mechanical energy ? Supposing we could trace all the complex workings of our mind, should we find there nothing but psychological movement and environment ? Is there no force in nature without or in personality within, penetrating and moulding, yet not a product of, nature or personality—something we can call Divine grace and act ? If we answer that in the negative, is God anything more than a name for the bigness and quantity of things taken generally, or, if taken selectively, then for the ' nice ' side of things ? Mr. Blatchford said of an eminent preacher, ' he is called a minister of the Gospel and I am called an atheist, but the only difference is that he calls nature God, and I call nature Nature.'

This is not, so far, a controversial question. Catholics and Protestants, Churchmen and Non-Conformists, by whatever name we call ourselves or one another, here stand side by side, hand in hand, heart with heart, conscious of its pressure and alive to the necessity of meeting it. It would be useless to talk about union

unless there were a common faith in God and Christ where we were already united. I put then three points as forming that common Christian ground which I trust I may assume.

(1) While we recognise God as operating in all things, we cannot identify God with His operations, neither severally nor as a whole. Nor can we identify God with our own psychological experiences. By God we mean something altogether greater than nature, whether physical or psychical, material or human. We attach the Name primarily to this transcendent Reality—not to that which nature is, but to Him who is its Lord, its Author and its Ruler.

(2) While therefore we rejoice to trace God's work in nature, we recognise how impossible it is for man, by means of inference from actual experience and within the limitations of his capacity, to reach to the knowledge of God Himself. To believe in and to worship a conception formed by our own reflection, the product of our yearnings, needs, experiences, imaginings, would be an idolatry of nature or an idolatry of man.

(3) From this darkness of heathenism, from what is purely natural and human, a way of escape which we could neither find nor make has been given to us through the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God. It is not that we cease to think of God as Immanent. Rather we can now do so with some real meaning, since the objective 'here,' 'this,' 'now' of the Manifestation of God in the Incarnation has redeemed and vitalised the abstract notions inferred from mere general operations. It is not that we cease to believe in God within us, for it is through the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, through the union between God and man there estab-

lished, that the indwelling Spirit comes to us, not merely as a name for states and operations of our own, but as a true gift, supernatural, miraculous, lifting our minds in thought and purpose above the self-consideration and self-choice which are natural to them.

In this setting out of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, can we not see some reconciliation of the two opposed ideas of the value of an 'external act,' and the two different senses in which we take it? Do we not begin to see that if the act is only something we do, it is meaningless apart from the internal PURPOSE which inspired it, and yet that that internal purpose must be first of all the acceptance of an external act which is done for us. As an eminent Free Church leader has expressed it, the New Testament 'is inspired by the conviction, not simply that something new has been discovered, but that something new has *happened*.'

If we are at all so far agreed in our faith, as a faith in Christ which can lift us out of mere faith in ourselves, the only point of difference lies as to the means of its present realisation or appropriation. But here comes a question of pressing importance. Is this presentation of the reality of God in Christ more than a past history? God a long while ago thus came to men, but what about ourselves to-day in our own daily life? Two obvious replies suggest themselves.

(*a*) 'If Christ has gone up on high, we must not think of heaven as some distant place. If we have learnt to know Christ after the flesh we must now learn to see Him in all around us, to serve Him in the least of our brethren and His. In every judgment of the nations, we must behold the Son of Man coming in the clouds.'

I do not in the least question the truth and value,

but only the sufficiency, of this reply. If this is all that can be said, then our present religious practice seems to have reverted to the essentially heathen principle. I do not use that word in an offensive sense. At its very best heathenism fails, not in what it does, but in its attempt to treat man's own doings, his own acts and his own natural course of thought as sufficient. In the absence of a Revelation it could not help doing so.

The heathen see God, and we are bidden to see Christ, in His operations, in the beauty, power, goodness of that which He works in us or others. But that operation is not Himself. The test of 'God Himself' is the test of worship. Here is the beauty of the sun, and here of the Christ-like life. Rightly we see God and His Christ in them, but only by abstraction. We may not identify them. We may not worship the sun, nor even the best of men.

(*b*) This Vision of Christ reigning is not however offered as sufficient. A further answer, more truly Christian, is that—'for Christ Himself we must go back to that Divinely given revelation of Himself in His own Word. We must hear His voice speaking to Peter, wrestling with the Pharisees and doctors; we must commune with Him in our heart as He once taught the people. This indeed is the central difference between the religious attitude of Catholics and Protestants. Both look to Christ as the one Name given under heaven whereby we can be saved, but, where "Catholics" look to the objective Christ as it were through the mediation of a rite ministered by a human priesthood, the "Protestant" goes back to the Christ directly to find Him in the Word, in those acts which are essentially and directly His own.'

As my whole concern is at present with the broad

principles of the Protestant position, I am not in the least troubled whether this is an entirely fair statement of the Catholic position. I am quite willing to take it as it stands. It is enough for me that this is the way in which the Catholic position strikes one looking at it from the Protestant side.

'The Protestant goes back to find Christ in the word.' I do not ask how far this position can be justified, whether or how far it can be maintained in the face of modern criticism. Those questions are becoming increasingly urgent, but we must be sure first exactly what the view itself implies.

Plainly there are very literal, or perhaps literalist, senses, which Protestants would not mean. They have been accused of an idolatry of Scripture, and they would not be wise to resent impatiently a charge which warned them of a danger. No doubt there are Protestants who do treat the Bible as if it was God Himself, and who imagine that if they read their Bible enough and quote it enough all is well with them. Such abuse of God's gifts comes all too easily to the best of us, but it would be unreasonable to make Protestantism itself responsible for individual failings.

Let us put such charges aside. We all believe that Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Whatever Protestants may be led into at times, no Protestant means to put the Bible in the place of Christ, yet we believe that Book contains the inspired record of what Christ did and said, of how He showed Himself. We do not 'find Christ in the word' in a material or literalist sense, but we can come to Him in so far as what is there written we take up, understand, realise, by our will, mind, imagination, that is in meditation upon the word with the help of the Holy Spirit.

This second answer is much more Christian than the first, because the object of our meditation is so much higher. In the Gospels we are meditating upon Christ Himself as the Son of God; in good people and in beautiful things we see His operation, we see Himself only by abstraction from that operation.

Nevertheless, neither of these answers seems to meet our question quite satisfactorily. Both are speaking of how we can come to Christ, whereas by all Christian principle we ought to be asking first how does Christ come to us. Both answers meet the latter question in the same way: Christ comes to us as a spiritual presence in meditation. What is the exact meaning of this word 'Presence'? I do not want to make my analysis more confused and puzzling than I can help, but I am afraid many people are already confused over the meaning of a presence and a spiritual presence. It is very important that we should understand the difference, and I can make it clear by a little analogy which I think all will recognise.

I am looking over some letters of an absent friend. As I think over them and recall him, his spirit seems to be near me. Few of us would care to say that such a spiritual communion and spiritual presence were unreal, but at the same time we should all feel that it was very different to what we should call the *actual* presence of our friend. How should we explain the difference?

Should we not say that while those who love are always perhaps in some sense present, the special spiritual presence was occasioned by our thinking and recalling, that is, it came through, by means of, a certain mental state. It will hardly be denied that experiences of such spiritual intercourse are most common with those of the strongest emotional and

imaginative capacity, just because they can reach the necessary mental state most easily. It will further follow that the experience is qualified and conditioned by the mental state and activity. For while the experience arises in or from my consciousness, it is not the whole of it. I must therefore abstract or select those thoughts which seem due to a 'presence' from amid others which are my own.

What we call an actual presence is not a presence *in* experience only, but *to* experience. It does not come up by being recalled in my mind by attention, rather it is a presence which recalls my mind when it grows inattentive. So also it is not qualified by, but qualifies, my thoughts, for, just as it stimulates and maintains, so it corrects, them by its independent actuality. And this actual presence is the ground of possibility to the spiritual. We very rarely have this sense of spiritual nearness to the absent except in regard to those we have known by a more direct personal intercourse.

In talking of a spiritual presence of the absent, I am not of course thinking of what is technically called 'spiritualism,' which seems to me a superstitious trading upon the much simpler, and yet much more complex, experience common in some degree to all of us. I am only trying to emphasise the difference between the spiritual presence and the actual which our common experience recognises, however we explain them.

Can we, however, apply those differences to Christianity? I maintain that the application of them is its first distinctive principle. It was the essence of heathenism that it could offer only a subjective Presence of God, a Presence in thought, in experience, which might be real, but which it was intensely difficult

to be sure was more than a psychological or mental state, for the very same reason that if it was not constituted by the state, it was yet dependent upon it. It was the essence of Christianity that it gave an actual Presence,—in a boat, in the upper room, and that actuality did not do away with, but vitalised all spiritual communion with God, defended it against the inherent defect of its own abstract method. The question we urged still remains : has that actuality for us now ceased with Olivet ? If what ' happened ' once is of so much moment to us, is there nothing parallel to it, maintaining and applying it, which ' happens ' now ?

Of the answer Protestantism meant to give there can be no sort of doubt. It asserted above all the vital necessity of faith in God. It was Christ who came to us, not we who attained to Him. His presence and His favour were the free gift of His mercy. For the sake of this Gospel it protested no human acts, neither pilgrimages nor vows nor sacrifices of masses nor any other, could make men righteous nor bring them to God. That Gospel and that protest, the doctrine of the mass as Christ's own act and gift set forth and emphasised, but since those who in theory maintained the doctrine were in practice habitually treating the mass as a human act, specially effective in acquiring merit, we can hardly wonder that the Protestant Reformers, accepting the confusion as it was offered them, repudiated the doctrine from which it seemed to arise.

When, however, Protestantism came to organise its own religious system it had no other basis from which to start than that given above : ' the believer finds and comes to Christ in the word.' With intentions the

most passionately sincere, nay, just because of its sincerity, Protestantism failed to see the confusions in which it was involving itself—the confusion between *faith in God* Who is more than man, and *faith in faith*, that is, in a feeling of assurance, which is a virtue and a feeling of man, the confusion between our coming to Christ and Christ coming to us, between Christ's Presence *in* the word and Christ's Presence in devout meditation *upon* the word.

The results were none the less serious from not being realised. An element of inconsistency had been introduced into Evangelicalism itself. Of course none of us would assert or believe for a moment that anything of ours, thoughts or feelings or states, could bring us to Christ or constitute a merit. We depend upon His grace. That is our faith. Yet so long as—repudiating the external act—our religious practice regards these states as the necessary conditions in and through which that special Presence is made to us, so long we must seek first to excite or create those states in ourselves, and so long therefore they become in effect merits.

While these inconsistencies are not realised, a man's faith may stand firm as a rock, and to multitudes of Protestants it does so stand, but the pressure of storm and the infiltration of the rising flood come to test the foundation of all human structures. If we look more widely I could point out among two very different groups of people how things are going. Each has its own lesson.

(1) We have very much need to consider the case of the younger generation. I have admitted that Protestantism has manifested a very real faith. No one can fail to see how much that faith was due to its faith in Holy Scripture; Protestants have constantly

affirmed that was its root. And for a plain reason. So long as men accepted the Bible as the unquestioned word of God, so long there was not merely in the past, but still present, an unfailing witness to something greater than their thoughts or their feelings. In a quite simple way it was possible to think of a Presence given by the word.

Modern criticism has made the old attitude impossible. I am not referring to the doubts thrown upon the essence of the narrative itself. We may be convinced that the conservative views more than hold their own, but if they triumph, they must triumph as criticism, and the result is the same. We are all alike driven to recognise that the Bible is a book, or a series of books, of human authorship. Though we maintain to the full its inspiration and its unique authority, we can no longer forget that what is written is not itself a Presence. That old idea never was consistently possible for reasons I have given; thus we are hardly conscious of a change although we are quite definitely substituting personal 'experience' as the ground of religion in place of the quasi-sacramental THIS of the book.

There are, of course, yet multitudes untouched by new difficulties, and there are many more of the older generation whose minds were formed in the old faith, who still go on bravely. But the younger generation, especially the students of our Theological Colleges, have been brought up in the new. We have taught them to look to 'experience,' and they have not looked in vain, but they are now faced by a question of which the older generation never thought, and of which we older men hardly realise the pressure,—'If I can now by processes of my own, by meditation and reflection, by feeling and imagination, realise and come directly

into the Presence of God, why was an external Incarnation ever necessary? No doubt the Gospel story as narrated to us provides the most inspiring of all subjects of Meditation, but the mere historicity of the facts does not affect its usefulness for spiritual purposes.'

Once started a multitude of unconsidered considerations push us along. Modern criticism must be honestly met, but if we only knew with what we were dealing we have no special reason to be afraid of it. The modern constructive efforts which arise from it are very different matters, for our Christianity has been so much a feeling and we have paid so little attention to its real basis that we have no idea what we are reconstructing. Anything that sounds nice with an element of admiration for the personality of Jesus stands sufficiently well for Christian. The Old Testament with its magnificent appeal to the reality of God is now unintelligible to us, except as a museum of Primitive Religions. Half the New Testament is passed over as 'Pauline Theology.' That God was made Man, that He died for our sins, thereby reconciling us to God, that we are raised in His Resurrection, we are told that we can afford to let all that go, for 'the dream of the Evangelist' still serves as a basis for religious experience. We do not recognise that our modern theories are busy saving our religion at the expense of our faith.

We reach the same conclusion by another and hardly less significant road. I demurred to the argument that our religious differences were merely temperamental on the scientific ground that men very rarely in fact choose their denomination. The difference of religious character is quite plainly due in most cases to religious upbringing. But there is another and much more serious objection to the theory of temperaments.

Have we forgotten that this is exactly the argument which an African brings on behalf of fetishism, the Indian on behalf of Hinduism, and the Arab on behalf of Mohammedism ?

We have come to base our religion upon personal experience and have freed ourselves from the dominion of the fact, and thus from the faith which can be set forth in Creed or presented in forms. Now we have learnt that these religious experiences are by no means confined to Christianity ; they are the common property of all mystics. The Hindu says : ' You come to God through Christ, and that access is valid for you. I also come to God and have experience of Him not less real, but I find other means to be more suitable.' When we began from faith, when by faith we were looking out of ourselves, when our hope lay not in our coming to God, but in His coming to us, the facts of the Incarnation and the Redemption of Christ formed a gospel common to all. But since experience is so largely a matter of temperament, I do not see how we can meet on this ground the contention of the heathen that his experience is equally valid.

I am afraid that even so we are not at rest. The psychologists are still waiting for us with their questions. 'Are these experiences of yours experiences of anything more than themselves ? Are they not just psychical states, brought about by appropriate conditions and imaginative activity ? The rules of the old mystics for producing the state of ecstasy are very suggestive. You talk of a supernatural Presence, but we are only directly conscious of certain states and those semi-dream states of vague, highly generalised thinking are very favourable to auto-suggestion from the sub-consciousness.' It follows that when we asked whether

the Name of God stood for anything, we were fretting ourselves in vain. It is true that in the world as we live in it there is no real meaning for God, but there are still men capable of beautiful thoughts and at times of heroic action, which after all are the things that really matter.

Many of those for whom I am mainly writing, men of sincere religiousness and true Christian faith, may think this last paragraph a mere scare. That is just why we are where we are. Because we had no idea of what we were doing, we had made ourselves the centre of our own religious world. Everything with us must begin from contemplation, which is our own, instead of from worship which is a worship of God. Next, the true substance and end of religion is the personal, and thereby we have made ourselves the judges of God. Of old men asked, what is His way and what is His will. When we began to ask, ' of what value are they ? ' we were asking of what value are they to us, and the question thus fatally misapprehended we had no ground left to answer.

Modern criticism has not really moved these issues at all, but when we have to adjust ourselves to a new situation, the faith which survives only as a habit slips out unperceived. A man-in-the-train—always much more interesting than the man-in-the-street—once said to me ' our Lord Himself told us that our first duty was to love our neighbour.' I intimated that this must be a new textual reading. In the version I was familiar with, it ran that first we were to love the Lord our God. He looked puzzled, and replied doubtfully, ' Yes, but then we don't know anything about God, do we ? '

(2) I have spoken of the young, because it is the

new generation which facing new questions works out the logic of what was to older habits but a casual inconsistency. I come now to the common man.

When we spoke of religious difference as temperamental, I asked whether we had not forgotten that this was exactly the argument brought by the heathen. I ask now whether we have not forgotten that this is exactly the argument which an immense mass of people bring for not being religious at all? However it has come about, the majority of English people do regard 'religion' as a thing possible for only a certain type of character. We deplore the indifference of this majority. I am convinced that if we knew their mental history there are few men who would not like to be religious, and there are few who have not, at least once in their life, tried to be. If they are indifferent, it is with a conscious purpose of making the best of a failure, very much as a man in early life regrets not being musical and ends in scoffing at music.

The root of this evil lies, I am convinced, with religious people. It is the very earnest people who are not sufficiently alive to the danger of assuming that the real substance of the Christian faith lies in just those parts which to them are most delightful. I can make my meaning plain if I might back out one paradox by another. Perhaps both are exaggerations, but there is only too much reason for saying that education in England is killed by clever people, and Christianity in England by religious people. In both directions the experts, the really able exponents, insist on all going by their road to the same kind of success. They fail to realise that the common man's needs, the kind of thing possible to him, and therefore his way of reaching that thing, are all widely different to those of the expert.

If we look back at the ideal of Protestant Evangelicalism as I have tried to express it above, that 'communing with God in His word,' by which the realisation of God's presence and actuality are attained, requires a certain intensity of feeling and imagination, and such feeling and imagination are the two most markedly temperamental things in existence. If we test by races, the Celtic temperament is emotional and imaginative, and it is undeniably religious; the temperament of the Englishman is stolid and matter-of-fact, religion comes to him relatively with difficulty. We may test it by classes and occupations. Religion is most found among people with a certain amount of leisure, who are not too hard driven by the pressure of affairs or exacting duties. Therefore it is more common among women than among men. Can we suppose, would anyone contend, that differences of temperament and business make men either less near or less dear to God? We know well enough that while they alter the form and expression, they do not affect the depth and reality, of love to wife and child? Certainly they do not diminish the need of faith in God, why should they alter its possibility? If, as we all admit, they do very much affect the capacity for 'religion' and for religious 'experience,' is not this a proof that our notion of religion has got out of touch with our faith?

I do not therefore feel at all assured that this very personal religious presentment is by itself entirely healthy or even safe for those to whom it is possible. It needs with it an element of practice less subjective. But certainly this religion comes in a form and with demands which a large number, I think, the majority, of Englishmen are least able to meet.

CHAPTER VI.

HOLY COMMUNION. II.

In the last chapter I stated an 'obvious argument' for Sacramentalism, part of which would consist in denying the possibility of 'plotting off direct effects of Grace, definitely and measurably.' While I admitted that we could not pretend to follow in this way the working of God's Spirit, I yet suggested that it was not wise to fall back entirely on a kind of Agnosticism, while affirming that the results must be there 'because it is written.' If certain things have that tremendous influence which is claimed for them, we ought to be able to show what the influence is and in a general way how it operates. I think also that this can be shown.

I have fully accepted the earnest protestations of Evangelicals that they believe in Christ, and that they have the most sincere horror of making their own piety, their own states of feeling an efficient merit or cause of His Presence or of His operation. But to recognise an evil is not the same thing as to escape it, and I have tried to show that that very thing of which Evangelicals have so sincere a horror is involved, implied, or suggested by their whole religious system. I have tried to show further that the difficulty which our children find in retaining, and which common men

find in even reaching, this evangelical faith, is a direct consequence of the inconsistency.

I must also try to show that the Catholic doctrine, by the assertion of an actual sacramental Presence given objectively through certain acts, does not contradict any principle in the Protestant position, but rather supplements it, renders it more consistent.

Here I must point out how much the difficulty of our discussion is increased by the uncertainty and variety of our use of terms. I have spoken of an actual Presence, of objective and subjective, of material and spiritual. We all can, and mostly do, use all these terms in several different senses. Every term I have used is capable of starting a fresh controversy, by which we can keep confusion alive for ever. I am only trying to explain real and very obvious differences in the spiritual life, by real and very obvious differences in common life, and I am not without hope that I can make a meaning clear to those who are sincerely anxious to reach a meaning.

Thus I have spoken of the actual and material presence of my friend and how real it is to me ; anyhow that it is different to the purely spiritual presence I can call up when he is absent. Whether actual, real, material, and all the rest are the best terms I cannot say. I call the one objective, and the other subjective. I believe metaphysicians have maintained that this is incorrect. I could argue about terms myself if I wanted to. For the very simple purpose for which I use them, is it worth while ?

The position which I am trying to explain can all be expressed in the words ' I want Christ,' and I mean that in just the sense of a child crying in the night ' I want mother.' We grown-ups may learn to believe, and the

child may learn, that though mother has gone home, she is not far off; but we shall not persuade ourselves, and we shall not persuade the child's trenchant truthfulness, that that is the same thing. We may argue endlessly as to the best way of describing the difference, but we shall not argue the difference away.

The child can only explain itself by saying, 'I want to put my arms round her, and I want her here to kiss me.' I cannot explain myself except by saying, 'I want Christ here to worship Him.' Pictures, memories, written words of the departed are all exceedingly precious, but they are not the very self. I may not *worship* my thought and imaginations, and I shrink from giving direct worship to what is only realised through those faculties. Is Christ also 'departed'; is there nothing now by which He is 'here'?

My phraseology, however, is curiously like that of the Protestant Evangelicals, but the inference is different. 'We want Christ,—Christ Himself,—not forms and ceremonies.' That we should be arguing against one another with the same words seems very confusing, but it is really very encouraging. Confusions we may hope to clear up for we are both passionately seeking the same reality. This is the Evangelical conviction common to us.

If the Protestant reply were made controversially, I should have to point out that it ignores the point. It is the whole of our contention that Christ Himself is present in that form. But that, however, in its turn does not meet the real Protestant objection, which is very frequently and better expressed in saying —'We want to come to Christ directly, not through a human or material mediation.'

Ought we not to examine more carefully what these

words, medium, mediation, mediator, really stand for? In the plain general sense to reject mediation is to repudiate all the fundamental processes of human nature, in which the universal and the spiritual are always mediated by the particular and the material. Gravitation is mediated by apples that fall, weights that burden, planets that move. The truth that is in the soul is mediated by words, and love by acts. To repeat the phrase I used above, the spiritual manifests its reality in the 'here,' 'this,' 'now.' In heaven it may be different where we shall know as we are known, but to us, because we were on earth, the Eternal Logos of God was mediated by a body as truly material as our own.

Is this changed by the Ascension? If so, who or what did S. Paul see on the road to Damascus, and S. John worship at Patmos?[1] Alas, we are not yet ascended, and our nature remains. For us then two attitudes are possible. We may reject all mediation, all idea of a 'here,' 'this,' 'now,' in one thing more than another. All are equally divine, and Christ is equally everywhere. Prayer and mediation and communion are then all equally futile. I have already considered that possibility, and I do not think any of us are inclined to take it. The Protestant phrase we have discussed affirms a mediation in saying that we come 'through the word.'

Or, secondly, we may, as in fact we do, accept some form of the mediation of an actual Presence. Catholics assert that it comes primarily through a Covenant act,

[1] If a modern critic disputes the record, at least he cannot dispute that S. Paul and all early Christians believed that the ascension had not invalidated the possibility of such a Presence or the legitimacy of worship so given.

but this is not more a mediating than if it were through the personal states or experiences which belong to meditation upon scripture. This word 'mediation' implies therefore nothing more than 'means,' the means through which something—in this case a spiritual Presence—is given that it may be realised.

It is, however, the essential necessity of our Evangelical faith that we should clearly distinguish the gift and the realisation as two things. The gift is God's act. The realisation, appreciation, 'discernment,' is ours; it is the first part of the response we make to a gift, but not the means or cause of it. It was not through our realisation of God's presence, through the ready faith of men in Christ, still less through the earnestness and love men felt, that God was made man and died for us. If it was through anything of ours, it was through our sin,—the sin of unbelief, the sins which rejected. If, then, we accept the Holy Communion, the Bread and Wine, as the means, the 'symbols' in the ancient sense of the word, whereby the Presence is made to us, the essential principle of Evangelicalism, the essential distinction of gift and response stands out clearly. We do not thereby ignore or slight the necessity of realisation or response. Our ignorance may make the gift ineffective for us, but it does not do even that certainly. If we are wilfully or carelessly ignorant, that which does not operate to salvation works in judgment.

Nor do we wish to make little, or even question the reality, of that Personal Presence which is given in experience, recognised in thought and feeling. Certainly we ought not to deny the possibility of 'coming to Christ directly.' We do, however, ask whether it is quite consistent with Evangelicalism to regard these methods, dependent as they are on an effort and state

of our own, as the only means of access? It is not the Catholic who limits God's operation by denying personal access; it is rather the Protestant who denies that there is anything except the personal, making the sacramental only one form of the personal. If we admit diverse ways, ought not that which constitutes a coming *to* Christ to be rather dependent on that which constitutes a coming *of* Christ? For this we urge that all of us, both those who can reach the fulness of such spiritual communion and those who can reach it very little and with great difficulty, have the greatest need of this faith in a Presence we worship and receive, given according to Christ's promise in ways independent of our feeling. Those of spiritual power need it lest they should be found believing rather in human capacities than in Christ, or in Christ only by virtue of their capacities; those of spiritual incapacity need it lest they should despair without some witness that God has not forgotten them. For in this presentment, in fact, all temperaments are at one. 'He who gathers much has nothing over, and he who gathers little has no lack.' Before the objective Presence in the Communion,—as before the Babe of Bethlehem,—Shepherds and Wise Men worship on the same footing. To Herod, as after to the Pharisee, there was the same 'Presence' even though they did not 'receive it.'

'What a man brings to the Communion, that he takes from it.' We bring to Christ at all times and in all ways our weakness, our vanity, our selfishness, our sinfulness, for this is all we have to bring, but is this all Christ has to give?

I said above, however, that there were two different replies given by Protestant Evangelicalism. Some certainly have very strongly affirmed to me that they

believed in a Real Presence in the Holy Communion —' as much as you do.' I do not say that this answer and the one we have just considered cannot be reconciled, though they appear to me opposed. I am quite willing to give both full consideration.

I am aware then that many Protestants do hold this second view. I believe very many do. Yet I must reply here what I have said above on the importance and significance of religious difference, that is, of difference in practice. If Protestants do so hold, how is it that this supreme gift of Christ's Presence is relatively so little sought? Why is it that the sacrament is coming to be less and less a cardinal factor in the system, while, just as men have grown more catholic, so it holds a larger place in their habits? On the other hand, where the divergence is so marked in practice, why should there be a certain tendency to assimilate our language? Surely there are forces at work in us which want further analysing.

If we look back at Church history we cannot help being struck by the large place which the Holy Communion has always held in the mind and practice of Christian men. Long before what are commonly treated as the ages of superstition, from the beginning of the second century, that is, as early as we have any quite clear evidence, the Holy Communion was felt to be the central expression of Christian worship and faith. Till the eleventh century, and then only in the West, there is little attempt to construct a formal theory. But whatever meaning men gave to the one, their idea of the Christian faith or their idea of the Communion, they quite naturally applied to the other.

I am not appealing here to Church tradition as a mechanical authority, but merely as showing the con-

tinuous judgment of the common Christian instinct. I think we have a right to say, and that we ought to say, that the Holy Spirit of truth moves in the twentieth century not less than in the second century and in the fourth and in the sixteenth. We cannot, therefore, be bound by the views of our predecessors. But just because we believe in an Eternal Spirit, we ought not with an off-hand assumption to make the ideas of our times the standard, and ourselves the judges between truth and superstition.

Broadly speaking, we may say that the early Reformers were anxious to maintain the early view. Socinus and Zwingli denied, or were inclined to deny, that the Sacrament was anything more than a sign or 'symbol,' that there was any special Presence or gift there more than at any other time. Socinus' view was largely determined by his unwillingness to allow any supernatural element in human life. Luther, however, asserted an actual Presence in terms from which even an extreme Catholic would shrink. Calvin, though he demurred to the idea of a 'Presence,' asserted no less strongly the reality of the gift of the power and 'virtue' of Christ.

We may see what they really felt in another way. How far it was reasonable, how far it was exaggerated, I shall not attempt to judge, but certainly the Reformers had a great dislike to the multiplied 'symbolic' rites and ceremonies in use. They swept away the Maunday Thursday custom of washing feet, the Good Friday 'sepulchre,' the Christmas 'crib,' the burning of candles, the use of images, because they were 'superstitious,' that is, because people had come to treat mere symbols as if they had a real effectiveness independent of the mind. If they retained the Holy

Communion, it was plainly because it stood on a totally different level. They recognised that the Sacrament was more than a mere symbol. It may be said that they retained the Communion because it has Scriptural warrant, but is it seriously contended that the Reformers took Scripture as a mere ' law ' to be implicitly obeyed, rather than as a Gospel to be understood? In any case the argument from authority, whatever authority we use, only carries matters a step back. Scripture gives to Baptism and Communion an importance it gives to no other forms, because no others were like them.

Even here, therefore, we can find some common ground, but we have still to explain why it is that this —the original view of the Reformers—held its ground so uncertainly and with so much difficulty. If we learn that, then we may find also the reason for the divergence of our own paths to-day.

In the sixteenth century, and I believe it is equally true now, the point of divergence between Catholic and Protestant was the question of consecration. The Catholic maintained that the Presence of Christ was given prior to and independent of the communicant by the priestly act. The Protestant Reformers, whether they held high or low views of sacramental efficacy, all were alike in refusing to attribute that efficacy to the consecration.

I am aware that to many of my readers this will be a mere theological technicality, the discussion of which seems childish and repellent. Let us, however, consider for one moment. Here are two bodies of people, who with much in common and earnestly desiring unity yet find that as they follow out their own lines of thought they are increasingly drawn apart. It is

useless to ask them not to follow out their own thoughts. Would it not be well, therefore, to find where the difference lies? 'It is such a small point.' Of course it is, but its importance does not lie in itself but in what it leads to. Let us take a homely illustration. We are all alike at King's Cross under one roof. There is very little difference between 'platform 5' and 'platform 6,' but the trains go to very different places.

I am more anxious lest I may be met by the reply that 'sacerdotalism' is the one principle of absolute and final difference which it is useless to ask Protestants to accept. I would rather defer the question of the finality of our differences till I have had an opportunity of setting out both cases. I am of course aware that it is the very edge of all difference between us. I have brought it in for that very reason. I believe it to be more loving, more honest and more hopeful to set our differences in the forefront in order that we may understand them. Of course, where men really differ,—and I do not think that any of us admit that our differences are unreal—if either party or both refuse to allow that they may have been mistaken, or that they can have anything to learn from the other, it is no use talking about unity. If in some way a union is established, then the union will be unreal.

I have tried to show above that the sacramental belief is a necessity of any stable Evangelicalism, because it is necessary to its consistency. I have tried to show this even in regard to sincere and convinced Evangelicals. I have also tried to show that it was necessary if we were to keep those younger members who were being so hard driven by modern theological tendencies, and still more necessary if we were to bring to Evangelicalism that large mass who are not of a

naturally religious temperament. I want next to show that this question of priestly consecration is necessary to a true evangelical view of the Communion. After that I will try to show how, at least in my opinion, the Catholic view of the sacrament and the Non-Conformist view of a 'free' ministry could in practice work hand-in-hand.

Supposing, then, that we could agree that in some real sense the cup which we bless is a communion of the Blood of Christ, and the bread which we break a communion of the Body of Christ, the question we must now ask is whether the difference we discriminate or 'discern' between this and any other act, whether the difference which does make this so great a blessing to the soul, is made by consecration upon the altar before and apart from our reception of it, or must we distinguish it only as we feed upon it by faith? Is the difference made by the priest in consecration or by ourselves in communion? And I would consider this question also, as I did the last, from a purely evangelical point of view.

The Catholic view is liable to the two objections of its materialism and its sacerdotalism. They are ugly words, but I do not in the least resent them. If our brothers see, or think they see, evil in what we are doing, it is a quite loving act for them to warn us. It would be unloving and unwise for us to resent it because they speak plainly.

About materialism, and its concomitant formalism, I have said a great deal already. These charges are brought by very earnest men, by very competent and very loving critics. I think the right answer is that they are fully justified. Materialism and formalism are not merely the dangers of the sacramental system;

they are dangers into which we have fallen very deeply. I might express a doubt whether we have fallen quite as far as our brethren think, for there are sides to our system for which perhaps they do not sufficiently allow. But I am not going to press that, for in all probability we have fallen far more deeply than we are aware. We need our brother's help very much.

I make this confession quite sincerely, but it does not in the least alter my position. If we try to safeguard our spiritual life by giving up everything that is dangerous, we may be safe, but what is there left to guard? The business man is in danger by wealth, and the student by learning, and the minister by succeeding in his effort to influence his people. In religion we give up this because it is emotional, and that because it is mechanical; this because it is modern, and that because it is traditional. Spirituality is endangered by the material; it is also endangered by unreality. And it is in this latter respect that our brethren need as much as we do the help of the clear-cut objective 'This' of the Sacrament. We could do so much for one another, we could do so much for others, if only we could bring these two sides together, and in order to do so we must each be ready to admit our deficiencies as well as to maintain our gifts.

I urge the principle, which may be quite well called 'sacerdotalism,' as necessary to the clear-cutness of the objective. At the beginning of the chapter I pointed out that 'mediation,' even material mediation, was a necessity of all human nature and thought. I would say the same of human mediation, that is, of 'ministry.' We are made in weakness, made for help; we are not made in self-sufficiency. Had it been other-

wise it would not have been ' necessary that one man should die for the people.' S. Paul puts the same point —' How shall they believe except they hear, and how shall they hear without a preacher ? '

' This however is said of preaching, which is essentially a human act. The claim that a mere man, not necessarily even a good man, can " make " the bodily Presence of Christ is to claim a miracle, to do magic.' But miracle and magic are precisely the words which describe what we are all doing, every day of our lives. Some one spoke to me of the love of God, and what he said burnt into my very life, altered its whole course. He spoke because he chose to speak and the Spirit moved him thereto. You cannot explain it otherwise. His speaking was no part of any thought-process of my mind, nor do I for one moment believe it could be explained by a calculation of the relative tensions in the cortex-cells of his brain. The mechanism of the organ does not explain the music of Mozart. The order of the vibrations which reached my ear was not manifesting a mere atmospheric law. It also was a miracle of the speaker's doing, and that those material sounds should have so changed my life was magic, if any one chooses to call it so and I have no better term to offer.

I grant that this speaking was a human operation, but we shall hardly argue that while we can do miracles at our will, God cannot do them by His. This argument of the human operation bears directly upon the point I have in mind. Let us compare the human operation of the preacher and the celebrant. I am asked to hear a sermon. A sermon is a human act. Therefore I want to know who is the preacher. Is he a man of thought ? Has he any ideas worth listening

to ? Can he express them well so that I shall be able to follow him ?

I have been told this is wrong. The preacher is the messenger of God, and it is the Spirit Who speaks in him. I accept that as true, and yet I do not admit that my questions are necessarily wrong. The Spirit of God spoke still truly in S. Paul and S. John, and yet the messages of S. Paul and S. John, though in no way opposed, are yet different as the messages of Isaiah and Jeremiah are different. Just because preaching is a human operation, although the message is of God, each man receives, not God Himself in the wholeness of the meaning of self, but so much as the man's own personal limitation is capable of apprehending. Perhaps this is saying too much, since the Divine Inspiration does carry a man in many ways beyond his personal limitation, nevertheless it is substantially true. The personal factor always does act under limitation ; it is never wholly transcendent. Even in mere narrative, even in working from one or two common sources, even where Inspiration is beyond all comparison at its highest, each mind sets the story forth with its own personal differences of apprehension. This is the Gospel ' according to ' Matthew, and this ' according to ' Mark. If it had not been so, then there would not have been four Gospels. Only Christ, ' in Whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,' suffers no limitation, is at once perfect God and perfect Man, sets forth the very Self-ness of God. In Him therefore only we can have perfect faith.

The preacher in his sincerity therefore sets before us so much of the divine truth as he has perceived, and I do not ask for nothing how much this is. It cannot be the whole truth ; it is not likely to be even pure truth.

As it happens, I have been a preacher myself, and I know only too well how much of one's own ideas mingles with the message. As a listener I am bidden to ' try the spirits whether they be of God.'

In the Communion, however, I care nothing who the celebrant is so long only as he has authority to do this thing. It is his ministry only to add the Now of time to the THIS of the bread and wine. I have only to ask that he shall do rightly that which he is bidden to do. It is nothing to me really what his personal character or even belief may be. It is right that no man should be appointed to this ministry who is not a good and holy man. Irreverence, unbelief, unfitness in him jar and fret me by their disharmony, but while they may hinder my appreciation, what is set forth and given is the Body of Christ. To that the celebrant's character neither adds nor takes away anything whatever.

' Sacerdotalism ! ' Yes, but what is the alternative ? ' The Presence of Christ is not made by the priest upon the altar but is real only in gift to the communicant.' Then I would ask, is it given only to the devout and faithful communicant, or is it given also to the indevout and thoughtless ? I believe there are some who do reply that the Presence is given to all alike. A position closely akin to this I will consider in Chapter IX., but it does not seem to me quite consistent with what—rightly or wrongly—I took to be the Protestant view that the significance of an act is dependent upon the spiritual devotion with which it is performed. Universally, however, so far as my experience goes, by ' communicant ' Protestants have always meant that the Presence was real only to the *worthy* communicant.

Now I want to press home the significance of these apparently technical and impertinent questions. If in

the Communion there is no special Presence at all, then of course, there is nothing to ask about. That view we considered in the last chapter. We are now considering the view that the Sacrament has a unique and peculiar sanctity, that in some way Christ is there really Present, gives Himself to be our food, our strength, our life, but the actual cause of this tremendous gift, the actual thing by which it is distinguished, is our coming devoutly and worthily. Apart from these qualities there is no Presence in the special sense in which we are using the word, remembering, of course, that we are not denying that general Presence of God in operation which is manifested everywhere.

In the preceding chapter it was maintained that this special ' Presence of Christ ' was being made dependent on a capacity for spiritual concentration, and I had to argue that that practically constituted a human merit. The position now before us makes no secret of the matter. In the Communion Christ comes to us if we are worthy—if we are fit, if we deserve it. Is this in any sort of accord with Christian teaching ? How much devoutness and worthiness was there to bring about the Incarnation ? What becomes of our Evangelical belief of the worthlessness of all human righteousness ? What becomes of the teaching of such hymns as ' Rock of Ages,' or ' Just as I am,' or any others in which our fathers delighted ? For my own part I accept the teaching of these hymns utterly. If I may come to Christ as a sinner, as blind, as one sick, I may find healing, but if His very Presence depends on my worthiness, what hope is there for me or for any man ?

Of course I do not suppose for one moment that any Evangelical believes or means that the Presence of Christ is dependent on his worthiness. I do not think

he would ever have implied it, if he had not confused himself by playing uncertainly between these two theories without clearly facing the consequences of either. Nevertheless, here is the plain significance of the position which has got rid of ' Sacerdotalism '—and thereby of the simple act by which the priest is bidden to mark for human weakness in human life the ' now ' of Christ's coming—in order to condition everything by human merits, spiritual efforts, capacities, fitnesses, devoutnesses. We will not be dependent upon a priest. No, we are dependent upon ourselves, or—to insert the saving clause I discussed elsewhere—upon what we personally have received of God's grace.

The question of Transubstantiation. There are two further objections to this ' Catholic ' theory. The first I need not discuss at great length, but it has been said that it is virtually the Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation. I trust I have already shown that I am solely concerned over principles, their real meaning and application. I am not at all inclined to quarrel about the names by which they should be called, providing those names are not seriously misleading. For that reason I cannot accept the term Transubstantiation, which does not describe any theory of Christ's Presence, but a theory about bread and wine, the ' substance ' of which is said to be changed into the substance of Christ's Body and Blood. This theory I neither hold nor have ever held.

In the first place, I do not hold it because, as our Church puts it, the theory ' overthroweth the nature of a sacrament,' and its presentation therefore of the mystery of the Incarnation. Christ took Manhood, took our flesh ; in the Resurrection these are spiritualised or glorified in that His bodily Presence was no

longer bound absolutely by the same material conditions as belonged to the days of His humiliation. Yet although there was a change or transformation of conditions which we have not sufficient experience to understand further, we do not speak of a change in the ' substance ' either of the Humanity or of the Flesh, still less would it be right to suppose that either was changed into the ' substance ' of the Godhead. At Capernaum and Emmaus, that which was of the flesh gave to the spiritual Godhead the This-ness necessary for human realisation, yet the natures remain distinct. So also we believe of the Communion. The Bread does not cease to be Bread, but it is used as the ' THIS ' of the Presence of the Body of Christ.

I would add, secondly, that after much thought I am convinced that the theory of Transubstantiation is itself meaningless and unintelligible. And I say so partly for the sake of pointing out the primary difference between the intelligibility or explicability of a theory or statement, and the intelligibility of a fact. There is no necessity that facts should be explicable at all. I believe that Christ is God and Man, that the water was made wine, that the Body of the Resurrection was the same Body which suffered though transformed and glorified. In the same way I believe that through the Bread and Wine this glorified Body is spiritually and really present in the Communion. If I were *asked* to explain these facts, perhaps I could say a great deal. If I am *challenged* to explain, it is much easier to say at once 'I cannot.' My ability to explain does not in the least affect my belief one way or another. I cannot explain how a thinking mind can have a body, nor how life, which is not a force, can guide and direct forces. Huxley, whom some call a materialist, declared

that it was fundamentally inexplicable how a physical nerve movement could give rise to anything so entirely different as sensation, thought, or feeling. A theory, on the other hand, is itself an explanation. So far as it goes, it at least must be explicable.

To express my point more shortly, if anyone says ' the water became wine,' or ' the water became steam,' I may or may not be able to explain scientifically how it happened. Even when we can explain, the explanation will not go very far. Some, indeed, maintain that science never does explain *how*, but only describes in detail *what* happened. However this may be, ' the water boils ' is a statement the clearness of which is in no way affected by scientific knowledge. If anyone says the ' water became Transcendental Idealism,' there is nothing to explain, for the words have no meaning at all.

In the eleventh century, then, when men said ' the substance of the bread was entirely changed, though the accidents (*i.e.* appearances) remained,' the words had a very crude and simple meaning. In a more thoughtful age, when men admitted that not merely the appearances, but *all* the properties of the bread remained, not even the genius of S. Thomas Aquinas, though he held himself bound to say that ' the substance was changed,' could make the phrase bear an intelligible meaning.

The question of Idolatry. I thought it necessary to reply to the charge of Transubstantiation because I know it weighs a good deal on some people's minds, but it is not a very interesting question except for the light it throws upon the meaning of intelligibility. On the other hand, the charge of idolatry, which is also brought against the Catholic, is of profound significance.

To my mind an idol is the most pathetic thing in the world, the consummation, the last despairing expression, of the futility of purely human thought. All the philosophers have ever done has been to sum up in barren nakedness the strivings of many centuries; yet the idol sums them up much better.

Men have lived and died and their children after them for centuries, stretching out hands into the darkness, thinking their thoughts, making their inferences, their guesses, their ideas, about God Who was all, Who was more than all and Who yet cared for them. They struggled because they so little realised, and they despaired because they did realise, that their thought of the Whole they did not know was but a self-made abstraction of the parts they did know—an abstraction made infinite by being made more barren and vague of meaning. From his thought of 'the Infinite' Anaximander fled to 'Earth,' as the real 'Element' on which all stood. It was because he despaired that man took the stone, the post, splashed it with blood, streaked it with red paint, carved a shape into it, called it GOD. After all it was a 'This.' It had an objectivity; it was a not-himself; it was more than a generalised notion of his own mind. This need of externality no one could escape. Even the Indian Pantheist, if he would keep any meaning in the name of God, since he will not materialise God as a thing, must materialise Him as a succession. If he will not say THIS, he must say 'This and This and This.'

Yet it was nothing more than the expression of human despair. Man had not really escaped himself. It was he who had chosen and made the idol, given it all the divinity it could have—the divinity of his own notion and his own choice. He knew it, and in his more

solemn moments he confessed that it was not and could not be God. It was a substitute for God.

In two ways therefore idolatry was a retrograde and a debasing step.

(1) Just so far as it appeared to satisfy the longing for a reality of some kind, it perpetuated, it gave men a reason for being contented with, that self-worship which it seemed to evade. The substitute self-provided is only effective as self-deceiving.

(2) It was the true purpose of God that He would live with men, whom He would then take to Himself. The idea of the idol was just so far right as it expressed the conviction that God was not the same as the idea we formed or the feelings we had about Him, that God was not ourselves; it was at least a protest against the self-worship of the philosopher. Yet it was wholly wrong in that it stereotyped the externality of God from His worshippers as a permanent condition. The idol therefore witnessed to men's need of a reality, which was more than a subjective imagining, but it offered a merely deceitful and fictitious satisfaction. It offered a very effective witness that God could not or would not dwell in man.

As we realise all this, the question must come up—why should God have left men so long in darkness? We can answer in three ways—because man willed it so, because it was inevitable, because God loved man, and these are one answer. Self-choice and self-judgment are inwrought in our very nature. Therefore God waited over man with exceeding patience, for it was only when the last lesson was learnt, when man had done all and despaired of all, that he was even capable of understanding the new hope that while man cannot come to God, God comes to man. All history and our

own lives teach us that this is what we are always forgetting, always needing to have renewed in us.

We have seen above how the Incarnation therefore met the natural craving which gave rise to idolatry. Here was a 'This,' that something 'not-himself'; it was genuinely and not imaginatively more than an imagining, just because it had not been constructed by, it was something given to, reflection and feeling. In that difference, Christianity brought men out of the first great evil of idolatry.

The second evil of idolatry is met by the Ascension. If Christ had remained on earth, His material Presence, once so necessary to the manifestation of reality, would have become the witness that that reality was *permanently* external. He must have been in a place, near some people, far from others, present at one time, not at another. He must have 'held court' in some city. He must have had a *curia*. 'If I go not away the Spirit will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send Him unto you,' for 'the Spirit dwelleth in you.'

Now let us turn from history to our own present lives. The Communion meets our present need with that which is first external and 'objective,' exactly as historically the incarnation met the need of man as a whole, for the Communion is not repeating but applying, re-presenting and renewing. Is this idolatry? We will begin with my first principle of idolatry, which I will divide up a little more closely, for I have a right that our belief should be considered, and if necessary criticised, as we hold it.

(*a*) Idolatry is a worship of that which is not God, which is known not to be, but which has to stand for God. Undoubtedly the worship of Christ in the Holy

Communion is only permissible if this is Christ Himself, nor could it be defended on any other grounds.

We admit, therefore, that the Reality of the Presence is the point at issue. If there is no such Real Presence to worship, it is idolatry, and the innocence of our intention does not prove the innocence of the act. And, although I have asserted that at heart the idolater knows his idol is only a substitute, certainly with a large part of his consciousness he actually does confuse the two. It may therefore be possible that we also confuse them.

(*b*) The test, however, of the idolatrous action lies in the fact pointed out by the Hebrew prophets that the idol is self-made and self-chosen. ' Ye have said unto the stone, " Be thou my God." ' If anyone should thus choose out materials such as seemed good to him and a form such as seemed suggestive to him, and invest them with a divine presence or a divine power, I admit that would be idolatry. I believe I could show in Christian life and history many instances of this being done in many quarters, for ' superstition ' is not confined to one set of people. Certainly according to our belief there is no such choice. We ' do this ' in re-presentation, renewing, of the Presence of Christ's death, as a memorial of Himself, because He has so bidden us, but it is not properly an act of ours at all. It is not our coming, nor our communion, nor our fitness, which achieve anything, except that we so become partakers of that which is achieved. The priest also has neither skill nor holiness nor privilege in this matter. What he does a child could do. That is why we hold so strongly to ' consecration,' and to the episcopally ordained priesthood. The ministering and that which is ministered are not invested with

power by us. Both alike are of Christ alone, and of His Spirit in the fulfilment of Christ's promise.

(*c*) It ought to be recognised on both sides that by many who share the 'Catholic' belief the charge of idolatry is strongly resented. However natural, I do not think resentment is right. In the first place, because I think the charge is only too true. Idolatry deliberately chosen would be an act of sin, but it is also a principle, a temptation or evil, which lies only too near to us all. If a man, whether 'Catholic' or 'Protestant,' is quite sure he has never fallen under it, and that he is in no danger from it, then it must be very near him indeed. I should begin to fear that it must have taken real possession of him.

In the second place, I would not resent it because I am sure it is brought in love. There are people everywhere who bring such charges in a bitter and contemptuous conviction that with full understanding they are competent judges of their brethren. To them I have nothing whatever to say. There are others really grieved about it, and to them one ought to explain oneself. There are yet others to whom 'that there is a great deal of truth on both sides' is a conviction, and not an empty common-place, who are therefore anxious to learn what truth there is which God may not yet have shown to them. What others call an 'accusation' is for them rather a question, a real difficulty, put somewhat pointedly. It is for them primarily that I am writing.

The difficulty they feel about 'idolatry' lies in the worship of the material bread and wine. It is a difficulty I feel as much as anybody, but it is a difficulty which besets us as Christians; it is a difficulty which besets us as men and women in our everyday

life. As I have said, the doctrine of the Holy Communion is full of such difficulties, because it is the most central expression of Christian principles, and Christian principles are full of difficulties, for they meet at once all the varied and apparently incongruous sides of human life.

'The Holy Communion is so very material.' Yes, and the Christian is so very material, and the reason is the same, for life is so very material. Love is spiritual, and the father comes home. Mother brings him up to see the baby, and stands by, leaning on his shoulder, while he takes it in his arms, plays with it, makes meaningless baby talk which means so much. I who am a 'religious' and a celibate have the best right to say that there is nothing on God's earth nearer to God's heaven, purer, truer, more beautiful, catching my breath even to write the words. 'But it is so very material!' Would the father be more loving, more spiritual, a better man, if he refused to do this? God forbid. Whatever our theories may be, God's people and God's earth are neither made that way nor meant that way.

If then, with the women, we meet Christ in the garden, what would anyone have us do? Is this a time to talk of 'material presences' and their 'essential divorce from the spiritual principle'? Has not Our Own come to us as He said He would, though beyond all our belief, when our belief had failed, and shall we not hold Him by the feet and worship Him? Are we worshipping flesh and blood? Are we worshipping bread and wine? God forbid, for we worship God and His Christ. Only that by these things, as then so now, Our Own has come to us. It was not our faith that brought Him—thanks be to God, for even now we

believe so little. Nay, even if it could be so, must we not have been found believing in our faith as a power so mighty that it could summon even Christ back from the grave where with so much spice we had lately buried Him ?

Or must we, on pain of being stoned as idolaters, believe that He has clean gone away into the distant space that some folks call heaven, understood, indeed, to be still operating, but never to be seen again save by those of great and mystic spiritual power ? Yet we did hear tidings of a place and way where even we common-place people, driven by hard material labour, very little capable of spiritual attention, to whose unimaginative stupidity the joy of spiritual communion comes so rarely, might yet again behold and worship Him. Was it after all a lying rumour ?

I admit once more that if this be merely an external vision, perhaps it had better never have been given. That we should go on through life in darkness, waiting for something which God does not see fit to give, may on cold reflection be better than that we should come into His Presence at intervals, only to be separated again, though I admit that it is a very cold reflection indeed. But then we are speaking of a Communion. The Presence of Christ is given in order that it may be received, but before it is ' received ' it must be already present that it may be received.

To say that the Presence is made by reception is to use the words in a sense for which it is almost as difficult to find a meaning as it is for the phrases of Transubstantiation. The moment, however, the question goes beyond the verbal point, it reaches a matter on which I feel far more clear. That any benefits whatever from that reception are qualified and con-

ditioned by the state of the recipient I somewhat sorrowfully admit. That the profane receive no benefit, but only the heavier judgment I know. That those in whom love burns most strongly, in whom humility and self-surrender have grown in depth and reality, receive richly, I, who barely know the names of those things, admit fully, though, as I have said, sorrowfully.

I let these words stand as I wrote them, and because I wrote them, but no, I do not mean to sorrow, I rejoice if others are nearer God than I. It is enough for me and more than I deserve that I may find my LORD at all. If, however, I am told that even that initial fact depends on any effort or capacity of my own, depends in any degree on my spiritual state or force, this, may God help me, I will not believe, for if I did I should despair utterly. It is hard for me to make any response to Christ, to find the energy to worship Him or the faith to believe in Him, when He does come. If I am also to find the energy and faith to fetch Him, I must give it up. For myself and for men like myself, to whom all spiritual effort is intensely difficult, the whole Gospel is a bitter mockery front and back. If this is Evangelicalism I must leave it to those who can manage such things. And in my inmost heart I have no wish to do anything else. I belong to a much simpler, rougher, less imaginative, more common-place order of mind, and I cannot bear the thought of being separated as if one was something special.

In saying this I know that I am only proclaiming the most burning convictions of all Evangelicals, even the most 'Protestant.' By Evangelicalism they do not mean anything but just this. Beside their love for simple and common souls, mine is a starveling thing of

words. Yet, just because of the love I know they bear, why have they made this message so difficult to us? Why have they thrown away that tremendous lever, which, as it would seem to a plain, even if stupid, reader of Scripture, Christ Himself put into their hands and the Apostles used, the simplest act witnessing to the simple fact on which all spiritual and personal realisation can be based?

As having been a 'Protestant,' I might say, I think that—I prefer to say, is it not true that—many Evangelicals do suffer in practice from that religious self-centredness which would seem to be inevitable where so much is made to turn upon personal realisation and experience? Of those to whom I write I know it is very little true. But much as I long for it I know they cannot give me any help at all in the spiritual development I need unless they are willing to begin with me just from this simple ground. As a matter of fact, I did begin just where they are, and learnt in due time how impossible it was for a character so entirely common-place to maintain permanently a state so special.

I need not trouble anybody with my own personal failings or wants. In the 'Catholic party' there are many men of a spirituality not less than can be found anywhere. I can have and have had their help for myself. But I am not now speaking of or for any party. I am thinking of the common, average herd, and I have no desire to speak except as one of them. I know how many are thrown back from religion because they have learnt to think of it as a matter of spiritual experiences, emotions, states, which they suspect to be psychological, but which they either know they cannot reach, or which they

have found by experience they cannot retain. I know that the Evangelical leaders have protested against this misapprehension. They are as anxious as we are to insist that Christianity is first of all faith in God, in God's manifestation of Himself, in the Atoning Death of Christ, in the supernatural gift of His Presence to His own, and not a feeling. Yet the impression remains, for while protestations reach the few, the principles involved in the system of religious practice are felt by all. And so long as that faith in an objective Presence of actual fact is set aside in favour of a Presence, which—whether subjective or objective—has no presentation except subjectively as a Presence reached ' in the word,' that is, by meditation, in thought and feeling, so long for the many that impression will remain.

Does the Catholic system succeed any better? I could answer both yes and no, for here the consequences of our divisions come in disastrously, as I think I can show if we consider two different applications.

(1) Wherever Catholicism, as in Roman Catholic countries, has been steadily and consistently applied, it will hardly be denied that its definiteness does maintain a curiously steady hold upon the roughest, most ignorant, least naturally religious people, just those whom we find it so hard to retain permanently. Yet when those very people progress in education, civilisation and independence, there it is apt to fail terribly, as in France. Where people do not progress, as in South America, the religion, even while it continues, is often very ineffective and unreal, spiritually and morally.

(2) In England there is a more complex situation, since Catholicism has been applied much less con-

sistently. Certainly many Church people, instead of using forms as the foundation of a spiritual life, are afraid to go beyond them, because that would be 'emotionalism,' in other words because it is the opposition road. Of course there is no need it should be so, but the sense of opposition always does tend to one-sidedness.

And this opposition produces very marked results in other ways. I must admit that our Anglican Catholicism, of which I shall have more to say hereafter, though it has tried to combine both sides of the Christian life, has not been very effective. I do not admit that it is a failure. It has been of the greatest help to multitudes of people, but its helpfulness depends on their learning to believe in and to worship a supernatural gift of Christ's Presence. Why should it be judged a thing incredible with us that God Who raised the dead should thus give Himself? Yet when we find many good Christians, whom we all rightly respect, calling it Idolatry, Romanism, Sacerdotalism, simple people readily turn suspicious and sceptical. They do not quite know what the words mean and they have not much power of discrimination, but the Gospel thus presented looks too living, too trenchant, and though not naturally inclined to unbelief, they are afraid to commit themselves to a supernatural which comes so near, makes itself so real, as that.

PART II.

A SYNTHESIS OF PRINCIPLES.

CHAPTER VII.

FREEDOM.

I HAVE tried now to explain what I take to be the necessary element of our own Church, Catholic or Episcopalian position, and why it seems to us so necessary. I am not entirely without hope that some of those who differ from us may see in it something worth considering. Further than that I should not venture to go. I know the Non-Conformists have convictions of their own not less precious to them than ours are to us. They have for a long time held that those convictions required a repudiation of our convictions. I have tried to suggest that that was not so. Claims to have 'proved' this and that are at any time foolish and irritating. I do not ask Non-Conformists to admit that their repudiation was wrong, but, if I ask them even to admit that it might be, am I prepared to admit that we may have been equally wrong in repudiating some of their convictions? Am I prepared to admit that their convictions are also 'necessary'?

In the abstract it will be observed that I have already admitted it. I have urged that if we find two bodies of men in acute and prolonged difference, there are two lines open to us. (*a*) Our first natural assumption is that one of them is right and the other has been led

astray. If, however, after three centuries both bodies are still passionately in earnest, full of vitality, is it not wiser to suspect (*b*) that they have each hold of something very solid. In the abstract, I think we should all come to this conclusion, but the abstractions are not very helpful.

I am therefore driven to try to state what exactly it is which, as I conceive, the Non-Conformists have to give to the Church, what they hold which we need. I am not going to give that position as I think it ought to be, but as I have actually learnt it. I shall do it very badly, for it is a very risky undertaking to state another man's convictions for him, nevertheless I must take that risk.

(*a*) I must see whether I have learnt the Non-Conformist position rightly, and even if I make mistakes, it may not be unhelpful to my brethren to see how far someone, approaching from without, has been able to understand them. (*b*) My main object is to ask how far our principles are really at variance, and, since it is I who am asking, I can only deal with the two sides so far as I can understand them.

The questions we have so far discussed have been questions of faith, questions of spiritual, vital, personal religion, concerned with the access of the soul to God. The questions on which we are most obviously divided, however, are ecclesiastical. They have their spiritual and personal side, to which we must look, but they are primarily questions of organisation.

To us, on the Catholic side, the unity of the Church appeals as a great prior fact. The individual finds a place in it ; it ministers to him, or rather he lives in it. As a unity, it presents itself as a great authoritative organisation, covering the whole world, including all

mankind in idea and in God's purpose if not in fact. I want to lay some little stress on this distinction, for if we are ever to understand other people or ourselves we must be always ready to consider the ideal first and by itself, even though we cannot forego the right and duty of asking also after the significance of its practical results—how far they are failures incidental to human weakness, and how far they come from some defect in the principle.

We Catholics have one common ideal. In practice it has been broken through over questions of methods. The Roman regards that organisation as essentially a centralised authority. This alone, he contends, can give a practical unity. The Anglican takes what might be considered an aristocratic view. The Church is a great republic, whose King is Christ, whose representatives are the bishops in all the world. It is a much more difficult ideal. It is a very good, though often painful, discipline to look at our own position as others see it. I am quite willing to admit that we cannot point to Catholicism as an obviously triumphant success. Anglicanism in especial has shown a hesitation and an uncertainty of principle which have brought her neither power nor even respect. I think I can show presently why this was almost inevitable. But if I thus submit to criticism, perhaps our brethren will allow us also to be critical.

To our eyes, the non-episcopalian bodies present a picture of something like utter confusion, a vast unnumbered mass of sects. Possibly, on second thoughts, that may be a little exaggerated. We can see three, or perhaps four, great outstanding bodies—Presbyterian, Congregational, Wesleyan, and Baptist. They have different principles and methods. One has a settled

ministry, and a considerable unity. Another has no formal unity. The third has, we understand, an excellent organisation. These bodies are, however, rather groups of bodies, and beyond them still lies the great mass of smaller bodies, ever multiplying. But the confusion, to our minds, is not merely ecclesiastical. They differ theologically. They are all open to ' tendencies,' and they seem to have very little concern where those tendencies will carry them. We no doubt are subject to the same forces, but, though we may differ as to what Church doctrine does teach, and still more as to what it ought to teach, we have as ' Catholics ' at least a belief, an ideal, that there is a Church teaching.

Probably I shall be told that this statement shows an entire miscomprehension of the Non-Conformist position. And I have no doubt it does. It is precisely my contention that neither of us understands what the other really means, and that it is just this mutual understanding which it is so vital we should get.

Let us consider the actual position. We will leave theological questions on one side. For the present we will assume that we are agreed in our evangelical faith. We have then to consider the practical or ecclesiastical question. The Non-Conformists claim that they are an integral part of the Church of Christ, and their unity as bodies constitutes a valid Church unity. This puts us in a very difficult position, for if we admit that any number of divided bodies and of people who do not belong to a body at all, are equally in the right way and in the true unity, we should seem to be admitting that there was no way and no unity which was of Christ. It is not that we claim to be right and everybody else wrong, but that we dread any admission which would

imply that there was no right. Further, if we admit that the Non-Conformist bodies are valid Churches, then we should admit that a Church could be constituted without those sacraments which we hold to be necessary, and without that ministry which we hold to be necessary to the sacraments. Plainly in the face of my own arguments, I for one could not make that admission.

If, however, I will not admit the Non-Conformist claim, I am also not going to deny it. I am convinced, and I believe all our experience proves, that if we begin arguing ' Which is the Church ? ' we shall argue for ever. We shall not find anything, and we may lose our tempers. But are we not all, or at least some of us, agreed that our present divisions do not represent the Unity which is according to God's Will ? We have still a great deal to seek. If we would seek it together, we must be ready to learn from one another. Our long controversies, our long habit of protest against this and that, makes mutual learning very difficult. If we begin with a new argument about which is most in the wrong, and whose fault it is that we are separated, I fear the separation is likely to go on a long time.

We, as Catholics, have always believed that unity must somehow centre round the historic episcopate. The Non-Conformists in general will not accept our view. I believe that some have confessed, perhaps more have an undefined feeling, that in the end it may be found so, though they do not see how and are not prepared to accept Episcopacy at present or in its present form. I am not, however, going to press that point. Presently I may suggest reasons for it, just now I am more concerned with the reasons for the rejection. If I have understood them aright, the Non-

Conformists would say that the criticisms we have passed on their divisions, and the Episcopal theory we put forward as a basis for unity, only showed that we and they were living in two different worlds. It is just this which makes me hopeful. When men differ on some narrow technical point, the issue must be faced as it stands. A world provides room for many possibilities. Certainly if someone lives in a world, like Mars, which the rest of us cannot reach, we must and we can afford to let them alone. If it is another world, like China, which we can get to, it will no doubt be hard to understand, but it is sure to be full of things worth understanding.

I do not approach the question as an expert, but as a learner. And I seem to myself to have learnt that it is our very ideal of Church unity, that very conception of a great organisation, which seems to us so attractive, but which seems to Non-Conformists so repellent. It is not so much that they object to our form of organisation as that they dread the ideal of an organised unity. They object to our form of organisation just because it implies that the form is a basis of unity.

I am afraid that our brethren will think us very stupid and very dense not to have understood that long ago, seeing how often they have explained it. Stupidity is a very common disease, but I think there are some excuses, and they are somewhat important.

(1) We have been engaged in a long controversy, and, as people will, we have argued about everything. We have argued about establishments and ' book prayers,' the characters of Archbishop Laud and Oliver Cromwell, transubstantiation and the origin of tithes, baptismal regeneration and the legislation of Henry VIII. It would be amazing if we knew what we meant ourselves,

and quite impossible we should know what anyone else meant.

(2) Again, our own position is essentially a definite, a fixed, a ' static ' position. Perhaps we are not all agreed about what it is, but disagreement about our position is much easier to understand than the ideal, which is not ' a position,' but an ideal of freedom and movement as such and, so to speak, for their own sakes.

(3) The fact is that both views are much more complex, and therefore confusing, than either of us realise. We Catholics believe in order, but we should resent, even the strongest Roman Catholics resent, the charge of not believing in freedom. The Protestants believe in freedom, but they also would resent the charge of not believing in order. Indeed, many of their bodies would claim that their organisation was in practice more orderly and effective than our own. I do not know enough to admit that it is so, but I do know enough to make me very chary of denying it.

This adds to our perplexity. The Presbyterians have a settled ministry, and they would not—we imagine—feel the same objection to an organised unity which the Congregationalists might. The Wesleyans, who have an effective organisation but not the same ideas about a ministry, would feel the objection in a different way.

There has been a good deal to confuse us, but under all these difficulties of denominational character there are four points which have persuaded me that this question of ' freedom ' is the real matter at issue.

(1) However the various bodies may differ, they are increasingly ready to recognise one another's systems.

(2) They are equally ready to extend that recognition to all the smaller and newer bodies, or even to those

individuals who do not care to include themselves in a denominational body at all. This fraternal toleration extends to anything that can be called genuinely Christian, and there is an increasing tendency to extend it to anything which will call itself Christian in any sense. Beliefs to which Evangelicals of fifty or even twenty years ago would have refused fellowship are now readily admitted.

(3) While ' recognition ' is thus readily accorded even to beliefs which are not mutually consistent, there is an inevitable and quite natural disinclination to extend it to ' Catholics,' whether Anglican or Roman. The new spirit of union may include almost any doctrine which a man holds for himself, but by the very nature of that union it cannot include what is held as *necessarily* true, as a truth by which all are bound.

(4) There is one specially theological movement which throws a deeply interesting light upon the principle underlying. In many Protestant circles—I am afraid it must be admitted—there is a growing uncertainty about the Person and Work of Christ. There is, on the other hand, a growing conviction of the reality and work of the Holy Spirit, Whom the Creeds call ' the Giver of Life.'

From all these considerations I believe that I shall be right to infer that the distinctive spirit of modern Non-Conformity, the spirit or ideal which is gradually absorbing all others, is the ideal which I call ' freedom ' purely as such, the ideal which a recent writer calls ' life.'

To do justice to Non-Conformity, I must of course emphasise the word ' distinctive.' I characterised the Catholic position as distinctively definite ; I am sure it would be resented if I said the opposite side

was deliberately indefinite. Most Non-Conformists, or many, do hold certain convictions very strongly, but I think they would admit that their *tendency* is to indefiniteness, and their dangers would lie on this side. To the doctrinal questions we will return again.

Our immediate concern is with the ecclesiastical question, in which the need of 'the definite' is represented not by convictions, but by order or system. I have admitted that the great Non-Conformist bodies are not inferior to us in the effectiveness of their system; I shall not even quarrel if they chose to maintain that their systems are superior to ours. Nevertheless, they have in two ways insured that organisation shall be subordinated to the spirit of freedom.

(1) The organisation exists necessarily for all actions to be taken in common, but that organisation is in principle democratic. The powers given to the officials are powers which belong to the body as such.

(2) Although the individual is bound by the decisions of the body, he is only bound in his capacity as a member. The modern spirit would not hold that he was bound to remain in the body. It might not *like* a man leaving his own body, but if an individual or group of individuals consider that the cause is sufficiently serious to justify the step, it would not be denied that they had a right to separate themselves.

So far as my ignorance goes I believe all Non-Conformists are unanimous about the 'Principle of Democracy.' I am not quite sure that all would agree so readily to what I might call the 'Right of Schism' or of Secession, for I do not mean Schism in an offensive sense. The Congregationalists, as I suppose, would admit it readily. The Presbyterians of the old school would certainly have demurred to it, but I think I

am justified in taking it as the second fundamental of modern Non-Conformity. Personal liberty is an obvious consequence of voluntary union as opposed to essential unity. It is also a necessary consequence of mutual recognition.

Now in both ways this is in marked contrast with the Catholic principle of Episcopacy. (1) Even if our bishops were appointed by the Church body itself—as in theory they are in all cases, and in most cases they are in practice—it still remains that the bishop has in principle an authority from God which he does not receive from the congregation. Even if he holds it in order as the servant of the congregation, it is still a power which the body cannot of itself bestow.

This makes a very marked difference. Once the bishop is established, however he was appointed, nothing can be done without him. He is the judge of the spiritual calling.

(2) The grip of the principle is finally fixed by the Church idea of unity. Individuals and minorities must be content with their share of what is provided for the whole. They are not free to try other alternatives.

In practice, of course, the system is both better and worse than its ideal. It is unfair to judge it by the abuses from which the Non-Conformist systems also are by no means free. Yet it should be noted that the concentration of power in official hands provides an easy mark for the introduction of political influence and acquired rights of patronage, which are all the more fatal because the relief of secession is cut off. On the other hand, the single pastor is far more amenable to popular feeling than the legal theory of his office would suggest, and his personal responsibility offers a more effective defence against the pressure of ' influential

patrons ' than is often provided by a nominally democratic system.

The practical advantages and disadvantages may be very evenly balanced but we need not discuss them. Episcopacy is put forward as necessary, that is to say as a principle and not as a convenience ; it must be so considered. Non-Conformists repudiate Episcopacy on the principle that no man has a right by his human judgment to fetter the free action of God's Spirit.

For my own part I appreciate very deeply the seriousness of this contention. In the abrupt form in which I have stated it, the contention rests upon two assumptions. It assumes that the individual acts under the influence of God's Spirit, while the bishop uses only human judgment. That, of course, would make an end of all government whatever. Missionary committees, synods, Connections, elders, are constantly engaged in judging what believes itself to be a ' call of God.' Certainly the point wants some consideration both on the side of the authority and on that of the individual.

We will take the authority first. I admit that the claim of the bishop is quite different from that of the other authorities referred to. The latter, in general, act only on behalf of their own organisation. They do not profess to have authority otherwise over the freedom of the individual. He can still give his ' message ' in his own way. The idea of the Church makes the authority of the bishop final, except so far as one bishop may permit in one diocese what another forbids in his. It is this absolute and final authority, as of principle rather than of administrative necessity, against which Non-Conformity protests.

In what way, however, ought the contention to be met that the bishop is not using a human judgment ;

the Holy Spirit is given to him for this very purpose that he should judge? I think the Non-Conformist would reply that he did not deny that the bishop also received the Holy Spirit, but that his judgment was none the less human and not infallible, for he could only receive the Holy Spirit according to individual measure. I do not think any other reply can be given. It is exactly the answer which I have already given, in one shape or another, to the argument that because God was in us, therefore our ideas about God could not be described as human notions; that because God was in us therefore the unity we construct was not to be described as man-made; that for the same reason, we could worship Christ as in us. I am not trying merely to score a controversial point. If we are to save our souls from an entire disbelief in God as more than a name for anything we choose to count nice, we must realise consistently the distinction between God in Himself, between Christ Incarnate and Ascended, between the Holy Spirit, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped, One God Blessed for evermore, and those operations of God which work in nature as force and in men as inspiration or indwelling. I have urged that to confuse that distinction was to make Christ, not our salvation from, but an excuse for, self-worship and self-will. I cannot refuse to admit it now when it seems to tell against my position. I do admit therefore that the Non-Conformist is justified in speaking of the bishops' judgment as a human judgment. I have a right to ask him in return to recognise elsewhere the principle which is to him in this case so clear.

Of course I do not suppose for a moment that any Non-Conformist would say that the individual was

necessarily in the right, merely because he is quite sure that he has the Spirit of God. The belief that things are true because we think them, and right because we like them, is only too near all of us. That is not what the claim for freedom means, but it is what only too many of us mean by it. I believe the Non-Conformist would not deny that the ideal of unfettered freedom was full of danger to human souls in just this way, but he would reply exactly as I replied about formalism, that we do not find safety merely by escaping dangers. We receive God's gifts always with the responsibility of using them rightly and the danger of using them wrongly. It is my ultimate purpose to show how both dangers can be met by making use of both elements.

I, on my side, must not hesitate, however, in the fullest way to admit that there is a use of freedom. It is of necessity that each soul should answer for itself to God, should learn to bear its responsibility. We also must learn to trust souls to Him, and if they seem to go astray, we must yet believe that He Who died for them will guide their footsteps in ways that we know not. What a man is to learn, he must learn himself. The attempt to dictate continually is false in principle and has now broken down in practice.

I have therefore spoken of the Non-Conformist's position, not with the intimate knowledge of one brought up in it, nor with that wide and thorough familiarity which belongs to the expert student, but merely as a learner, anxious not to state a theory of his own, but to be sure that he has rightly apprehended the central conviction of others. Even if it did not naturally appeal to me, I should be bound to give it the respect and earnest attention to which such deep con-

viction is always entitled. As a matter of fact it is a principle which does appeal to me very much. I admit, however, it would not have occurred to me independently that it required its own expression in the ecclesiastical system. Now that I find others insisting, not only on its individual, but on its ecclesiastical, importance, the more I think over it, the more I find myself forced to admit the claim as a very vital element which our Church ecclesiastical system gravely lacks.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORIC EPISCOPATE.

I HAVE in the last chapter made large admissions. Are they consistent with my position as an Episcopalian? I have already explained what that position is, but I must take leave to re-emphasise it in that spirit of loving offensiveness which I have defended above.

To use a classic and authoritative phrase, we on our side are speaking of an 'historic Episcopate.' If we were addressing ourselves to the Methodist Episcopalians, we might plead that we and they were agreed upon the 'monarchical' system, could they not bring themselves to accept the historic principle also for the sake of unity? If we consider our agreement with the Presbyterians upon the principle of an ordained ministry, could we not somehow come to a working agreement upon the method of its ordination? I have a suspicion that such proposals would be resented, and I am quite sure that if accepted they would be useless. If I have learnt my lesson rightly these bodies are not separated from us merely by details of a system, but by a certain spirit, which in substance they share with Non-Conformists at large. It is with that whole spirit that we must reckon. I am aware that the Presbyterians do not maintain that spirit at all so strongly as the Congregationalists, for instance, but if we ask them

to come over to our side as against Non-Conformity, I believe they would positively refuse.

If we ask others to accept the ' historic ' Episcopate, we are not standing out, and we are not asking the Non-Conformist to take so grave a step, merely for the sake of antiquarian sentiment, merely because it is so much nicer to follow a system that is very old rather than a system which is not so old. By the ' historic ' Episcopate, we mean a God-given order, something which is necessarily and unalterably right ; something which is more than a question of relative efficiency ; something which we own to be in just this shape indispensable. We should have no right to insist upon it, and we could not ask that it should be accepted for any other reason, or in any other way. I quite see how reasonably the Non-Conformist holds our belief in a God-given order to be fatal to his belief in the God-given freedom of the Holy Spirit. This is the root of our quarrel. I can only ask others to believe how intensely painful and unwelcome it is to us to be obliged to put it forward, but we cannot help it. The Non-Conformists are most anxious to be tolerant, but plainly they cannot tolerate this. Which of us is right, and which of us must give way ? That, I have said, is a hopeless question to ask.

If I may once more go back, I should like to pick up various hints which the course of this study has suggested. I have maintained, and I maintain, that no Unity worth having can be got by surrender. I am sure we Catholics do not mean to give up our faith, and I speak for myself when I express my sincere hope that the Non-Conformists will not give up theirs. I have maintained, and I maintain still, that God is leading both of us forward and not backward. I repeat, I have

no idea of surrendering, and I do not want anyone else to surrender, any conviction.

I have also pointed out in the last chapter that a deadlock always looks final, and may be final, when you can narrow the issue to a single point. If I and a friend fall to arguing whether travelling by land or by sea is better, we may not easily agree. Personally I loathe the sea. I admit that this is temperamental, and I know there are people (of depraved temperament) who like it. If, however, some third party asks where I want to go, it begins to occur to me that the world is a biggish place, and, if I am bound for Calcutta, even the Indian Ocean may be preferable to Thibet and the passes of the Pamirs.

Let us apply this. Is freedom more vital than order, or order than freedom? I perceive a very long argument ahead of us and no very certain goal. Is my dinner or my digestion the prior necessity?

> Some ha' meat that canna eat,
> And some want bread that lack it.

We are talking of human life, and life does not treat these things as alternatives. It finds a place and an absolutely necessary place for both. If we ask what is the place for each, the deadlock may begin to loosen a little. We may still differ as to the size of the two spheres, but each is so necessary to all of us that we may begin to recognise that the person who differs from us in character is not the person we ought to quarrel with, but the person whose help we shall probably need. He is probably able to do things we cannot.

In the last chapter I studied the Non-Conformist position with some care. We 'Churchmen' know a fair amount about the tenets and the systems of this body and that body, but I felt sure that there was

something of a common spirit or ideal which the bodies share differently, but which they all share in some degree, which is being increasingly felt as a bond of unity among them and as being different from ours. I want now to study Episcopacy in the same way, for it also is a principle, as well as a form.

This is, I think, one root of all our apparently hopeless difference. It is easy to see other people's forms, and we know our own. We can see the practical confusions in which others are involved, and we rejoice in their difficulties. We do not like to admit it even to ourselves, but we have a hope that before long the other party will give way altogether and disappear, and then we shall get unity on our own terms.

The fact is that while we know our own practices, we are at most times but dimly conscious of our principles, and we hardly realise that it is our faith in our principles which enables us to bear up against the disappointments, failures, imperfections, of our results. It hardly occurs to us at all that other people have principles. So we wonder how the opposite side can go on and on without recognising what a failure it is. No doubt it is a very absurd attitude to take up, but then we do not take it up. More generally that is what we find ourselves doing. If anyone is inclined to resent this description of his attitude, now that I come to think of it, it is that which comes most easily to myself.

Certainly if we are to get out of our dead-locks and so forth, we must begin with principles, that is, with the real central aims we and others have, and consider our forms, first, as constituting a guide to the principles in question by virtue of the fact that forms are the true expression of principles. Perhaps it was very stupid of us not to have seen this in the case of Non-Confor-

mity, which has always professed itself to be a principle. Where, however, we have to do with a thing like Episcopacy which is somewhat a form, it is much easier to forget that it also has a principle. And that is a pity, for if we forget it, then both Episcopalians and Non-Episcopalians are apt to assume that the form which it has at any given moment is that for or against which we must contend. Anglicanism, however, represents only one form of Episcopacy, and it is desirable to look at other forms that we may see what underlies them all, for it is the principle, and not one particular form, with which we are concerned. A little historical summary will not be out of place when we are talking of an historic episcopate.

The ministry of the New Testament times—let us say of the first century—is a highly controversial question. For the moment we will pass it by. In the second century, as soon as we get any clear view of what is going on, we find a number of churches in many places. Their minds are possessed with two ideas, each of which is leading to its own developments. On the one hand, each church has a certain completeness in itself. Its own spiritual organisation develops to keep pace with its own needs, and this leads to an elaboration of the ministry. On the other hand, each church feels itself to be a part of a greater whole ; the development in this centralising direction leads to councils, to metropolitanates, patriarchates and so forth. It is with the local church life that we are mainly concerned.

Speaking, therefore, of the beginning of the second century, perhaps of the last years of the first, we find each Christian Community has its own pastor. He might have assistants and deputies of various kinds, but, on earth, as in heaven, there was one flock and one

shepherd. There are many changes going on, but this idea remains fixed. The changes or developments take place first of all in regard to the idea of the flock. What constitutes a 'Church,' a 'congregation,' a 'community'? When believers were few, their unity was a simple and obvious matter. They all knew one another, and were known to their 'overseer' (*episcopus*).

When Christianity began to reach out into the country districts, so soon as the distance became too great to allow of people coming in for service, the villages constituted 'congregations,' and they also must have a pastor, an overseer, or bishop, even though there might not be more than a dozen Christian families. To the Roman mind, the local unit was always the *municipium*, or borough. The city, therefore, was indivisible, while the 'village-bishops' settled on the territory of the city, were subordinate. They were often men of little culture or outlook, with little sense of the responsibilities involved in membership of the Church as a whole, yet as bishops they were difficult to restrain. From the beginning, bishops were assisted by Presbyters who acted as their deputies when required. It was a long time before the old system gave way, but in result it was found better to send priests to take charge of the village congregations. The old idea still remained. Parish is the ancient name for the bishop's charge, and his office was an 'oversight.' Parish is still the name for the unit constituting a single charge. We no longer call it an *episcopatus*, or oversight, but a charge, care, or *cura*. The man who thus receives 'cure of souls,' is solemnly 'instituted,' and can only be deposed, like the bishop himself, by a solemn Church process.

In the city itself, the development was much slower.

The Christian congregations soon outgrew the possibilities of a single 'pastorate,' a single personal oversight. But because it had a common life the city was very difficult to divide. It was only under stress of actual necessity that it was broken up into divisions which could not help being somewhat artificial. The Roman applied the city idea to the country. It is a peculiarity of English politics from very early Anglo-Saxon times to treat the boroughs as if they were country districts. We have made them into counties, and we have split them up into parishes as if they were groups of villages.

Outside the Roman Empire, as in Ireland and in Wales, there were no *municipia*. The primary community was the tribe; the divisions were rather of persons than of areas. The bishops, therefore, were bishops of tribes, and the whole system was different.

I have thought this historical summary worth noting because it helps us to see how a system could change and develop without ever losing its primary idea, for the changes belong only to the application of that idea to different kinds of community.

I want, however, to trace two very important developments within the community itself. The first affects the clergy. In the earliest stage the life of the community is very simple, and the bishop's office in relation to that life is very simple. S. Ignatius can say, 'let nothing be done apart from the bishop.' In time the mere increase of numbers makes it first difficult and then impossible for the one pastor to know all his flock personally. The actual ministry of souls has to be left to the presbyters. The bishop becomes rather the bishop of the clergy than the personal pastor of the people, just as in a very large school the headmaster is rather the head of the masters than the

teacher of the boys. He is more concerned with the body as a whole than with its members.

The second change is among the people. There are always different classes of minds, characters or temperaments to be allowed for besides the different social classes. There are the cultured and the ignorant, the leisured and the busy; there are also the earnest and the commonplace. In a small Church, such as a village, these are personal differences and easily allowed for. In a large Church, where they become differences between large groups of people capable of acting together, they may produce serious results. Both these changes, however, the separation of a clerical or professional state, and the separation of different classes, whether temperamental or social, are a quite inevitable part of that progress from the simple to the elaborate, from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, as Herbert Spencer called it, which is the evolution implied in the growth of all bodies, biological or political.

The last of those class distinctions to which I have referred, that between the earnest—whom we may call the 'devout' by way of a distinctive title—and the commonplace, is not peculiar to religion. Every form of activity, art, learning or sport, has its skilled enthusiasts, and its average followers who without attaining marked success still make use of it. These average followers must not be confused with the indifferent, nor must we confuse the enthusiasts with the professionals. As a general rule the professional class is recruited from the ranks of the skilful and enthusiastic, but it never includes all the skilled, and, especially if the professional class is large, it will include some who are not more than average. There is often a good deal of difference

between the skill of a professional and that of a devoted amateur. Their way of looking at a subject is also somewhat different. The narrow tendency to regard music as the only thing worth living for is perhaps more common among enthusiastic amateurs than among those who make their living by the art.

As early as S. Ignatius' letters we hear of people who had consecrated their lives to religious pursuits, and yet were not clergy. We hear of them again in Tertullian at the end of the second century. In the third century we find sects of earnest people who are anxious to forbid all second marriages, flight in persecution, the restoration of the fallen, anything which seems to come short of the very highest ideal. Some of them are ready to leave the Church on this ground. The bishops resist them, not because the bishops are especially wise men, but because they are officials and have learnt that the body is made of common people and exists for common people. In the second century controversies the bishops were mainly right, but here, nevertheless, we may see the coming danger, when the bishops and the clergy will stand for religious worldliness and easy-goingness. Then ' the devout ' will be wanted in their turn.

After the third century there are no new schisms on this ground. ' The devout ' have found a life for themselves. Monasticism has begun. The head of the monastery is not a bishop, nor even a priest, but an abbot. The monks are not priests. S. Jerome regards such office as inconsistent with his monastic calling. They are laymen or women who have given themselves up to a purely religious life, and to purely religious pursuits. Monasticism does not, of course, include all the devout, but it is the organised expression of the

devout spirit which others follow according to their opportunities.

The clergy stand somewhat apart from this movement. They do not very well understand it, and sometimes they do not altogether sympathise with it. They have, however, learnt to realise that there are people who have needs which others do not feel, and that room must be left for them. They claim a certain power of oversight which they do not exercise very efficiently, and they provide the clergy necessary for the sacramental services.

This condition lasts through the Middle Ages. It may not be a very good way of organising the two sides of life. It may have been mixed with many abuses, yet it did enable each to do its own work, and give its own help. There was hardly any religious revival in the Middle Ages which was not first a Monastic Reformation. Let us admit that 'the devout' had separated themselves too far from common life. Perhaps in the Dark Ages that may have been necessary if devotion was not to be altogether overwhelmed. But in the thirteenth century, the objection was more obvious. Then came the friar movement. The devout leave their seclusion. They come into the towns; they range the country-side. With their fervour they quicken the too complacent worldliness which has beset the normal organisation.

In Ireland things took a different course. The bishop was not backed by the solid weight of the *municipium*, while the abbot had the support of his monastery, and the Irish monastery was a much bigger affair than its continental equivalent. Thus it came to pass that in Ireland Church authority was taken up by the abbot, who kept 'episcopal chaplains' to perform the

necessary episcopal functions—ordination and confirmation.

In this summary I have tried so far as might be to avoid all controversial and all doctrinal questions. I want only to call attention to two leading points, and to the relation between them.

(1) From the second century to the Reformation we find a continuous, official, ministry. In application to different circumstances, it undergoes a good deal of modification, but except in Ireland it is always responsible for the formal machinery of the Church system. Always, and this time without any exception, it is responsible for the continuous sacramental life other than baptism, and even that is left mostly in its hands.

(2) This official system has, like all systems, a marked tendency to extend its activities, to absorb all functions into itself. In the third century, the agape drops out because it was not a clerical service. Towards the close of the fourth, the private 'offices,' the non-sacramental services of psalms, Scripture reading and the like, are brought into Church; they become clerical services, though the clergy never took complete possession of them. Most momentous of all, the clergy drew in to themselves the right of preaching, but this also they never completely monopolised.

Always alongside of the official there is another class, representing, not the normal form of Church life, but rather its exceptional enthusiasm, intensity, fervour of devotion. The two systems are in an uncertain relation. Sometimes the one, sometimes the other, gains a predominance which is unhealthy, for both are, as sides of Christianity, incomplete in themselves. If the officials are subject to worldliness, the devout are subject to fanaticism, to a narrow, exclusive 'religious-

ness.' Yet, not without a good deal of friction, they work out a progressive result.

I have so far omitted all reference to the first century. It is the most important period of all; perhaps many of my readers may think it the only important one. I have left it out, because it is not only a period full of controversy, but of 'critical' controversy in the technical sense, and of technical criticism any writer must keep clear, unless, as a fully qualified expert, he is prepared to deal at length with all the diverse and unsettled theories. Even if I were qualified, the results would only be confusing. We are at present looking for broad principles such as the plain and untechnical person can appreciate.

There is a further difficulty in treating the first century. For the earlier part in S. Paul's letters we have a reasonable quantity of evidence, though on technical points of ecclesiastical system it is difficult to interpret. For the last thirty years we have as nearly as possible no evidence at all. It is exceedingly easy to make guess-work reconstructions, but we cannot really interpret our materials except by trying how far they do or do not fit in with principles which we have learnt to recognise elsewhere.

This is all I shall attempt to do. It is quite evident that in these early Churches, there were no 'Bishops' in our sense of the term. That general 'oversight' of the community as a whole, which in later development constituted the central responsibility of the bishop, at this time remained with the Apostle. S. Luke, however, tells us that there were presbyters, whom S. Paul in Acts xx. 28 calls 'bishops,' though in his early letters S. Paul never alludes to them unless we may assume that they are the 'teachers' of Gal. v.

6 and elsewhere. The Churches were simmering with the joyous excitement of their new-found faith. There is sufficient evidence that the forms of worship were steadily maintained, but men were being most swayed by the exercise of great and sometimes miraculous gifts or charismata—healings, tongues, prophecy. Of these, therefore, S. Paul has a great deal to say.

S. Paul's first written reference to 'bishops' (presbyters) is in Philippians. In the Pastoral Epistles, now that the end approaches, it is the permanent ministry, its qualifications and right functioning which occupy his mind. The 'charismatic ministry' was not a regular order. Its members were not 'ordained.' They were highly gifted individuals, and the gift in the man was its own witness, though its exercise called for some regulation.

If now I am to come to Reformation and Post-Reformation times, I am again involving myself in peril of further controversy. Theological controversy is inevitable, for we must find out what we mean, what we believe, what we need, and why it is meant, believed, needed. Critical controversies are a very tangled business. Historical controversies are full of bitterness, and of them I feel inclined to say that those who dig in graveyards find corpses.

For my own part I have entered this business as a learner. The Non-Conformists taught me to see the importance of certain principles which are too easily taken for granted, taught me to see that those principles also manifested themselves in forms of very various kinds. When I looked for them in history, they seemed to me to throw a great deal of light on events, notably on the growth and influence of the Religious Life, which had not otherwise shown much meaning. I want to

apply it to our own more recent history, and see if it will not explain to us something of the position in which we stand to-day. The interpretation will of course be my own; it will be what I seem to myself to have learnt. Very many people will differ from my interpretation strongly. I do not ask them not to be critical; I do ask them not to be controversial. I ask them to take my interpretation as a suggestion; to consider whether it does not throw some light on what has happened.

I propose then to consider chiefly the Reformation in England, not because it is more important than any other, but because in England all the different ideas met in their most confusing shapes, and because it was out of that unsettled English confusion that our present situation has mainly arisen.

We will say that the English Reformation began under Henry VIII. Its professed intention was to retain the essential Catholic position, but to get rid of abuses. In the main this was always its ideal, though of course men had from time to time very different ideas of what should be recognised as abuse. Its first step was to get rid of the papal authority. The essentially Catholic system was that of the bishop and parish, and this was retained without material alteration; but the second step was to remove all the 'voluntary' part of the system. Monasteries, friaries, chantries, were all swept away together. We are not here concerned with the motives, or with the manner, but only with some of the consequences, of what was done.

(1) The severing of the papal connection was not so startling a change as we, with our experience of modern Romanism, are apt to think. Ever since the Council of

Constance, and even before that, the idea had been occasionally talked about, but its actual result was to throw the Church entirely into the hands of the king, and this was a very serious matter. We know from history that if the State attacks religion, she does so at her peril. If, however, the State tries with more cunning to manipulate religion to its own ends, I have admitted that the Episcopalian system, just by virtue of its centralisation, provides an easy mark. The State fully realised its opportunities. All authority for the diocese was concentrated in the bishop alone. All parish authority was concentrated in the parish priest. The State recognised nothing but the bishops taken singly. The law defended the freehold of the rector as a property. All common Church activity was suppressed and in this way paralysed. The laity came in nowhere save that as individuals their rights were also made legal. The clergy who lived amongst the laity and knew their mind had no effective voice in any matter of common policy. The bishop, oppressed with legal forms and without any solid Church feeling behind him, was almost helpless before the independence of the parish. This mingling of autocracies, each absolute and isolated in its own sphere, and helpless outside of it, is another form of Episcopacy, the Episcopacy of legalism. It cannot be called a very desirable form ; it is certainly not the only one, even among Anglican Churches, though its root idea has very deeply coloured the Churches which are not bound by the restrictions of the English establishment.

The repudiation of the papacy facilitated, though it was not the sole cause of, this change. The Pope had been a recognised part of the Church system, but he was outside the king's reach, and in a number of cases

the bishops had been able to shelter themselves behind him. I need not discuss, I do not deny, how much he abused his office. I only point out that the state absolutism was never complete so long as that power existed.

(2) The State had therefore brought the official religious system under its control, and it did so all the more completely by destroying its rivals. The official Church had never loved the friars, the chantries, the monasteries, and it acquiesced in their departure. The State now went on to put this official system in entire possession of everything. Here was the Act of Uniformity. Here was the book it prescribed. Nobody must use any other. Everybody must go to the official parish church where it was used on pain of certain fines, and nobody must go anywhere else under pains still more drastic. No layman might preach. In the hands of the State, the triumph of the official system was complete.

Of course such Act-of-Parliament-religion was a foredoomed failure. The Church officials themselves were restless and uneasy over it. Especially at a time of theological unsettlement there were many who objected to the Prayer Book on theory; there were sure to be many to whose spiritual needs it did not correspond. But it was the working of the system as a whole, its presentment rather as a policy than a belief or even a religion which repelled the most earnest. Those whom I called 'the devout,' those who sometimes called themselves 'the godly' or the 'saints,' were drawn off into other movements.

The situation was the more difficult because the official Church did not know her own ground. The principle indeed was clear—the whole Catholic faith as

it had been set forth in Scripture, interpreted and maintained by the Church in all time, by the early Church, by the undivided Church, freed from those elements which had not always been held, which were accretions or additions. But how in detail were these to be distinguished in a time of so much stress and imperfect knowledge? Would it not be simpler to let all idea of a continuous Church faith go, and to be content with individual experience and the obviously scriptural? The Church varied, she compromised, she said one thing and she said another. There is a great deal of justification for saying she had no ground, that she was nothing but a compromise. Stephen Gardiner, and many more who began by accepting her principle, concluded that if one means to be a Catholic at all, one must take the whole present condition. He accepted the papacy. Nevertheless, the conclusion was unjust. The Church had chosen a principle, though she had no clear perception of what it led to. Cranmer, Jewel, Hooker, Andrewes, represent a steady and continuous effort to learn its meaning. Even Cranmer, who was the least consistent, held fast to these elements of episcopacy, an episcopally ordained priesthood and priestly consecration. Though in the Second Prayer Book he 'pared it to the quick,'—reduced the Catholic system to its barest elements,—under the utmost pressure of the government he refused to go further.

Certainly the Church was deplorably weak. Her position was as yet too indefinite to arouse enthusiasm. If the State protection had not held the doors fast, it is difficult to see how the system could have kept together till it had got itself formulated, but the Church had to pay a heavy price for the protection. The State, of course, did not want a Church 'theological' position.

To politicians positive theological convictions are exceedingly inconvenient, but they had to acquiesce in the theological effort. Common sense told them that the Church could not exist without principles, but politicians and lawyers have never ceased to scoff at Church doctrine from that day to this.

The Church therefore suffered from State protection, not merely from the worldliness and greed of courtiers, for this was an accident of the times which she has grown out of; not merely from the disastrous stifling of her true life, for that she might have broken through. She suffered most of all from the fact that in studying her own faith she was forced to treat it as a policy. Every casual abuse of the Church courts, every iota of the system as it stood, must be defended. It was impossible for her to reconcile anything, or to ask if the two systems could not be combined. She meant to defend Episcopalianism, she was really defending legalist Episcopalianism, and legalism deals exclusively in positive right and wrong. It may admit the discussion of *when* is a thing right, but it thinks very little of the qualifying *how far*. It considers qualifying circumstances, but it is very soon wearied by qualified principles.

I have been quite frank about the failures of Episcopalianism, perhaps I have won my right to criticise its opponents who were certainly not very helpful. They had come by a system of their own much earlier, and a system much more clear-cut than the Church ever made hers. They meant to have it, and to have it entire. Anything else was the Scarlet Woman, and dregs of Rome, and the abomination of idolatry, and many more things. They defied the government and all its works. Religion belonged to religious people,

and a government was only tolerable when it would submit to the teaching of religious people.

The State and its Church seemed to be winning their way. There was a furious explosion, and the religious won. Rupert and the Cavaliers were no match for the deadly earnestness of the psalm-singers. Now was the time for the kingdom of righteousness to be established by religious men. It was honestly attempted, but of the upshot there is no dispute. The nation made up its mind, almost as one man, that anything, even Charles II., was better than this. What does it mean? Professor Gardiner said the nation was not worthy of it. I venture to offer another reading. I am afraid my brethren will not like it, but I have a good hope they will see its significance.

These intensely devout, earnest, religious men made the fatal mistake to which the specially able and skilful exponents of any mystery are always liable. To use the educational type I have used once before, our professors of learning and culture imagine that theirs is the one true way, by which all, learned and common, must go. They can very rarely understand that the common man's use of a thing is quite different to that of the clever man. In result, the professor builds up theories, and the common man laughs at them. Once his last examination is over, the common man turns with relief to be practical, energetic, and common-sense. We are partly beginning to realise this.

'The person who has no grip on scholarship is an intellectual outsider.' No, he is not. If only he were shown how to use the powers he has got, he is often a person of quite reasonable intelligence.

'Religion is for the religious people.' May be it is; but well do I know and firmly believe that the love of

God and faith in God are just one thing, equally possible and equally needed for all men alike. ' The man who is not religious is irreligious and profane.' He is nothing of the sort, but if you identify the love of God with ' religiousness,' if therefore you try to force the common man along the paths of the devout, irreligious and profane he will be. The reign of Charles II. was the inevitable outcome of the Commonwealth.

After the restoration, the Cavalier party triumphed. It was a party triumph. Episcopalianism was no more necessarily a belief than ever, but it was the banner of the victory. Certainly this was not the time for an examination and reconciliation of principles. There was another Act of Uniformity, just as there was a Five Mile Act. From that day to this, the separation has gone on. The only men who have ever shown a real theological conception of the necessary relation of the two sides of Church life were the two Wesleys. They conceived of an organised band of the sincerely devout, maintaining their devoutness by use of a common Method, but using the sacramental Church system.

This had its great possibilities, but it was not possible at the time on either side. The Church was still bound and tied by her system of legalist officialism, and would not or could not look beyond it. The members of Wesley's fraternity did not understand it or care about it. John Wesley himself was not consistent. The plain fact is, the Methodist as well as the Churchmen failed to see that the Church was more than a legal body as distinct from others which were doubtfully legal. No one adequately appreciated the true force of the sacramental question.

In process of time the Church has grown out of a great many of her defects. By God's mercy there has

been given to it a strong spiritual life, but it is impossible to deny that many evils remain. Of the present position of Anglicanism I should like to say something later.

These historical reviews may seem very discouraging. There were good earnest men on both sides. How is it that they understood one another so little? It all looks so unreasonable. I do not pretend to answer such questions adequately, but I have a great belief that the course of history is just the story of God's way of working out His own purpose. I do not think this belief should throw us back on 'whatever is, is right,' but it might imply 'whatever was, was right.' Here we have two tremendous principles, so different and yet, as I believe, so necessary to one another. If we, wilful, thick-headed children of men were ever to learn what God meant by them, and the relation which exists between them, may it not have been the wisest and therefore the most loving thing, to let us develop each of the two separately till we had really learnt what each could do for us, and also the inherent weakness of each without its fellow, till we had learnt how impossible it was to do justice even to that gift we had received without other gifts for which we must still search? We need not believe that God left Himself without witness, because He now calleth men everywhere to repent. We need not believe that the sixteenth century, nor the seventeenth, was a world without God, nor should we believe that God was a partisan of one side or the other, Who had yet failed to secure the triumph of His own views. May it not be for us He has prepared some better thing, that they without us should not be made complete?

CHAPTER IX.

THE RELATION OF PRINCIPLES.

So far I have professed to deal with different sides of our subject—in the first part with the religious, and in this second part with the ecclesiastical, life. In the last two chapters, I have dealt with different views of those sides—in Chapter VII. with the necessity of Freedom and in Chapter VIII. with the idea of Episcopacy. What is, however, a difference has under modern conditions become a separation, so wide that I felt sure I should not be able to get those who were normally in opposition to realise the importance of that part on which I wanted to insist unless I showed it in relation to their own part. I have therefore already anticipated much of what I want to say here. This relation of principles is, however, so entirely the substance of all that is worth saying that I must try to present it by itself, although it may involve some repetition which to the abler among my readers may be needless.

(1) I have tried to show that it was the sacramental system, rather than episcopal government, which constituted the most central and positive difference between us. I tried also to explain why the apparent formalism of the sacraments seemed to us so necessary to the maintenance of the evangelic faith in Christ.

(2) In dealing next with the ecclesiastical system, in

the light of what I took to be the central principle of Non-Conformity, I explained what I believed myself to have found in history—that there always had been from the beginning a formal, permanent, official system, and it was this system which appealed most to the common man, on which he could rest. The system itself recognised that and protected his rights. There had almost always been in addition a voluntary or free system, which was the spontaneous creation of men of the highest devotional temperament. From its very nature it was not a permanent system ; it had a great variety of forms. The two systems, though very necessary to one another, were apt to develop a certain friction. Sometimes the free system claimed to rule everything. When it succeeded, it fell into sanctimoniousness, and the common man was driven into irreligiousness. Sometimes the official system gained an exclusive control. When it succeeded it fell into worldliness, and the devout man was very often driven into schism.

We have then before us three pairs of factors, which I will tabulate :

In human temperament : the common—the devout.
In the Church system : the official—the free.
In religious practice : the sacramental—the non-sacramental.

If now we are to make any synthesis between the two principles, we might begin with any one of the three pairs of applications. The last two, however, both lead to our deadlock. Episcopalians are not willing to admit the existence of a "free" ministry : Non-Conformists refuse to admit the need

of "sacramentalism," or the sacramental powers of an official ministry.

I will begin therefore with the first, and here also are serious difficulties or confusions to be met.

(*a*) In the first place we have to recognise that the proposed distinctions, so far as they relate to men, are comparative only; so far as they relate to systems they are tendencies only. Considering men, there is no such thing as an exclusively "common man," and there is no such thing as an exclusively "devout man." Temperament—so far as it goes—divides us, but fortunately it does not go half so far as we think. The devoutness of the most devout rests upon the essentially common basis. The formalism of the common man, if it is not to be the formalism of death, has its expression, its expansion, in devoutness. A positive division between the two is sheer ruin both for the individual and for the Church.

(*b*) My identification of the official with the sacramental will, I think, be admitted by Non-Conformists. They will entirely deny my claim to identify it with that which belongs especially to the common man. They feel as strongly as I do that Christianity is a faith for common men, yes for sinners. If they believed that Episcopalianism was the simple man's belief, they would be Episcopalians too. I welcome that denial. I could not have called them my brothers, save in the conviction that we here are at one. I would remind them, however, that they will not resent my contention one whit more strongly than my Catholic and Episcopalian brethren will resent my suggestion that the "free" system of Non-Conformity is that of the devout. Nevertheless I maintain my ground under the reservation given—I am speaking of tendencies, of the

distinctive idea, rather than of an exclusive character. So far as the Non-Conformist contention is concerned, I have already shown my reasons, but I think they will be easier to follow if I take the two together.

The second confusion with which I must deal is of a much more subtle kind than the first. It lies at the root of the resentment felt by Non-Conformists and Churchmen alike. We are all so conscious of the mischief and folly of splitting up our Christianity that no one will admit he does it. No Churchman will admit that he is a formalist or unspiritual or indevout, or that his system gives any encouragement to such defects. No Non-Conformist will admit that he thinks himself above the common man, or that his system is not made for the common man.

I accept these repudiations on both sides as perfectly genuine, but after all we can only repudiate what we are not conscious of doing, and what we are conscious that we do not mean to do. We are conscious of a common aim, ideal, or purpose, but it still remains for us to ask very earnestly and critically whether our system does imply what we recognise it ought to imply. I have made frank confession of the defects which I think lie on our side. I trust I have been neither bitter nor contemptuous in charging defects upon others. It is the difference between the kinds of defects in each case which seem to me so significant.

I want to start from that temperamental difference of the devout and common man. Are we so entirely free from the evil of dividing or splitting them asunder? Professor Harnack approaches the history of Christianity from the side of modern German Protestantism without betraying any consciousness of those difficulties which the more evangelistic of his fellow-countrymen

feel so acutely. In his *History of Dogma* (vol. iv. c. iv. Eng. Trans.) he reminds us that we must not only study the development of Christian thought, we must also watch the growth of Christianity of the second rank, that of the common and ignorant men, who brought with them so large a leaven of their heathen ideas and superstitions. I only suggest that we must not merely watch, we must understand, this growth.

In the first place, Professor Harnack's summary sounds a little too like, "This people which knoweth not the law is accursed," to be quite satisfying. In our Lord's day there was a Judaism of the multitude, which probably contained much superstition, and there was a Judaism of the thoroughly religious,—Scribes and Pharisees,—as well as the broad and enlightened Judaism of the Sadducees. "The religion of the common man,—of the ignorant,—the religion of the carpenter," were the taunts all enlightened heathen threw at Christianity itself from the beginning.

I am not denying that the common Christianity was superstitious, but if the modern mind has learnt anything from the study of Comparative Religions, has it not learnt that the superstitions of the heathen are the expressions of human cravings and needs which have not yet found their proper satisfaction? If, for instance, sacramental belief seems very like the idolatry and magic of heathenism, may it not be that it is so just because the sacrament is the God-given answer thereto? If not, then we may be admitting that the very human feelings which led to those pathetic results were not merely wrong in the gratification they found, but absolutely wrong and abortive in themselves.

I may admit that there were superstitious uses and ideas, but even here the balance is not all on one side.

There were among the heathen a mass of ignorant idolaters, but God did mean something to them. The philosophers had many profound ideas, but it was not clear that the Unknowable Infinite meant anything. The Chiliasm of the early Christians was a crude belief; was it altogether a false belief? Christ was at least so much of a reality that men became martyrs gladly. And this reality was not always a prominent feature of intellectualism, Gnostic or other. When we have taken out of our Christianity all its crudeness, its miracles, its magic, its super-naturalism, is there anything real left except the moralist conclusion that it is nice to be nice? The "niceness" of the spiritually nice person is, I admit, very nice, but the niceness of the common person is as crude as ever. The common person sought, we believed Christianity offered us, something real which could lift us out of ourselves. This very enlightened Christianity represents the enlightenment of the enlightened.

The instincts which are purely human cannot be so lightly set aside without grave peril, not only to the common man, but to those who are most tempted to think themselves superior. Christianity presents itself in formal, material facts,—the Birth, Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Christ. A man may grow out of, or fall out of these, by falling—or growing—into self-satisfaction or self-sufficiency, but there is nothing else beyond or above to which he can grow. Search the universe from end to end, in nature, or in history, God you will not find; but, if you keep a mind at all, two things only you will find to live by—Christ and yourself.

With Christ, all life through, you may grow into the joy, the understanding, the trust of Christ's life and

suffering, victory and triumph ; but only if conscious of weakness and nothingness, you can believe that just that weakness is in Christ exalted and just that nothingness has by Him been filled. And it is the historic Jesus Christ, Who is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever,—the same to men of all capacities, not less my Saviour because I understand so little than of the saint who can understand so much.

A spiritual life, rightly growing in humility and trust, is therefore possible for us just because it rests upon the coming of Christ, not as some natural result of our human effort, thought, feeling, but as the super-natural gift of God Himself. We can make so much of it just because we can make so little of it. It lifts us above ourselves, just because it has a reality independent of our making. But if we realise that, my question still remains. Is this whole idea now gone from our daily life ? If thought and feeling—helped by imaginative memory—reign as the sole road of spiritual attainment, whatever may have been the case once, it is woe to the dull and feeble, woe to the common man, woe to all those who are weak in these mighty and redeeming powers.

The Church has maintained and still maintains that there is for us to-day equally a super-natural Presence of Christ, which is a gift and super-natural in so far that it is not a result consequent upon any state of ours. Our faith and our spiritual effort are conditions of the appreciation, assimilation, use, of what is given ; they are not conditions of the Presence itself.

Whatever is given to human experience, bound in time and place, must, however, imply some human agency. That is true even of the incarnation and the atonement, for Jesus Christ is " born of the Virgin

Mary," and "suffers under Pontius Pilate" at the hands of these particular soldiers. But the human act supplies only the occasion; it qualifies or determines the time or place; it does not condition the nature of what is done. The Virgin Mary does not add her holiness to that of the Only Begotten Son of God; nor does Pilate add anything to the saving virtue of the Cross.

So also it is of the priest. As he brings nothing of his own, it is necessary only that he should have been appointed as God's agent of time and place. To this the form of appointment bears witness. The bishop in ordaining him is merely an agent in handing to the priest that one power which he is to exercise, and the power of giving that power is one which the bishop in his turn received. From first to last, the agency not less than the result, everything witnesses to the act and gift of God. There may be other things which make the priest too great a power in the Christian life, but this by itself makes him a very small thing, almost without personality or independence.

Here then is a single uniform idea. We can escape from it in three ways.

(1) We can deny that, since the Ascension, there is any Presence of Christ other than we are capable of making for ourselves when we will. If, however, men have so great a capacity of reaching to God, it does not appear why they should at any time have needed anything else.

(2) We may allow there is a Presence here, but that it is made by each communicant for himself. That, however, is contrary to the idea of a "gift," which must come to us as God's act and not ours. Further, it implies almost inevitably that the gift is conditioned by degrees of worthiness or capacity to attain. But

Presence, in all ordinary use of the term, is not of degree.

(3) There are, I believe, some who accept the principle of a Real Presence as we do, but contend that the power to consecrate is given by the congregation to one whom it chooses as its representatives. But this view has the same inconsistency as the last. We are speaking of a certain Presence of God, which is the gift of His tenderness alike to the individual and to the Church. It cannot therefore be made by our act either individually or collectively.

In effect, even where men have for a time separated the two, the belief in a real sacramental Presence and gift and the belief in a sacramental Episcopacy have by an inexorable human logic always gone together. Wherever the Episcopal ministry has been rejected, the sacramental belief has failed. Wherever belief in a sacramental gift has been weakened, Episcopacy has been defended as a convenience or compromised as a question of minor importance.

On our side then the question of sacraments is the primary question at issue. The question of Episcopacy is merely a necessary factor of the sacramental position. Why we hold sacraments to be so necessary I explained in more detail in my first part, but I thought it worth while to review the argument that we might have its real meaning before our minds now that we were considering the ecclesiastical side. Strongly as Non-Conformists may differ from us on the sacramental question, I believe the question of Episcopal *rule* is that with which their minds are more concerned. I must try therefore to explain what I take to be the relation between the Episcopacy of grace and the Episcopacy of rule, how far each goes and how far

either can be limited. That will depend on our idea of the position of the sacramental sphere in the general life of the Church. I will try to discuss the main principles of the relation in this chapter, leaving the practical working out for the next. It will perhaps help to clear away some confusions, if I take certain much discussed points first.

(1) The Church distinguishes very clearly between the method of appointing or selecting her clergy, and the gift of the powers they are to exercise. Appointment belongs to the Church "order," the general life of the Church. Since the clergy are to minister to the Church, they are selected by her or by someone who acts on her behalf. The methods employed are almost infinitely varied.

Originally the bishop was chosen by the whole Church of which he was the pastor. When the diocese increased, he was chosen by the clergy of whom he was the leader. In England the formal election is made by the Cathedral clergy, who represent the original body of the clergy of the diocese, not assigned to parishes. In all the more modern Churches he is appointed by the representative diocesan synod. In some cases the bishops of the province or district claimed a right to appoint, since the province formed one whole Church. In England and many other countries, the king "nominates," though he does not appoint, acting as the representative layman of the National Church.

In general it is left to the bishop to choose the clergy, but of old, at least in some cases, they were chosen by the people. The superior of a Roman Order has, I believe, a recognised right to put forward members of his community for ordination within the Community.

While appointment is so varied in its methods, there has never at any time of which we have real knowledge been any change in the rule that a bishop becomes a bishop by being consecrated by bishops, and a priest becomes a priest by being ordained by a bishop. On a well-known occasion a certain person was appointed bishop by what was afterwards held to be an invalid procedure, and he was consecrated. The diocese refused to accept him, and he never in fact entered his diocese. Having been consecrated, however, no one questioned that he was a bishop, and on some occasions elsewhere he so acted. Similarly, 'assistant-bishops' are bishops in the full sense of the word, but they have no ruling authority at all. In all ways, therefore, the sacramental power, the right to exercise it, and the authority of rule must be kept as separate questions. Episcopacy of necessity only requires the first.

(2) One of the most difficult questions we have to meet is in the recognition of the 'validity' of one another's ministry. The main subject I want to work out in this second part is the way in which such a recognition could come about. It is naturally a very painful subject, and, unless we are clear about the points involved, it may end in a mere wrangle. Unfortunately, through our not having recognised that the spiritual question of the sacrament was different from the question of rule and order, and that the former was the really fundamental, the question has become very tangled indeed. In studying Non-Conformity from without, I ventured to suggest that Non-Conformists seem to us not quite clear as to which of two positions they did mean to take up. Here I think the blame of the confusion lies with us. Though, to my mind at least, the Church position is clear enough, we have

certainly not been clear about it, nor made ourselves understood.

One very real difficulty to an open-minded comprehension of one another's position, I should be very glad if we could clear away at the start. Suppose an Episcopalian holds that Episcopacy was constituted as a divinely ordered centre of authority for the Church, it will follow that while the Non-Episcopalians can recognise an Episcopalian ministry as good for those whom it suits, the Episcopalian could only regard the Non-Episcopalian ministry as a breach of God's order. Whether there is such a divine order, is a matter of fair discussion. The Episcopalian may be quite wrong, but what is gained by calling him 'narrow-minded'? Many, or all, doctors hold that the infection of malaria is communicated only by the bite of an *anopheles* mosquito. I have heard colonists assert their conviction that there are other ways of infection. That also is a question for fair discussion, but I never heard anyone try to settle it by saying that the doctors were narrow-minded. May I not ask that a reasoned position shall be met by reason and not by epithets? I ask this with the better claim, because that position, which many Episcopalians do take up, does not represent a line which I mean to press.

It seems to me that, for want of a clear distinction between sacraments and order, the question has become involved through a further confusion between the words 'valid,' 'right' and 'effective.' Now, if at a private meeting a man insists on speaking against the will of the chairman, he has no 'right' to do so, but his remarks may be very 'effective' all the same. There would be no sense in saying that his remarks were 'invalid,' though a resolution he proposed very well

might be. Valid is a legal word to be used with exactitude. A vote, a will, a deed, an Act of Parliament, may be ineffective, because nobody carries them out, and they may be wrong because nobody ought to carry them out, and yet they are valid, nor is their validity affected by questions of rightness and effectiveness.

These distinctions are of importance. Episcopalians, even if they are not always conscious of it, are thinking primarily of sacraments. The Non-Conformists are thinking primarily of preaching. In what sense then are we asked to recognise the Non-Conformist ministry? I certainly do not deny, and I have never met any Episcopalian who denied, that their preaching was *effective* in bringing souls to the love of God. Whether it is as effective as ours I do not know and I have no desire to judge. I hope it is much more effective, though I still think it loses a certain amount of effectiveness through the absence of sacramental presentment.

But if I am to admit that the Non-Conformist ministry is as *valid* as our own, I must assign to it a power which its own members disclaim. So far as this goes, therefore, Episcopalians admit the effectiveness which Non-Conformists claim for their ministry. The Non-Conformists do not admit the validity specially claimed by the Episcopalian ministry.

(3) The question whether bishops are necessary to the *esse* or to the *bene esse* of a church is sometimes discussed among Episcopalians. I do not think Non-Conformists feel much concerned, yet I think it is worth discussing here because it throws a good deal of light on that distinction between the two sides of sacrament and government which Episcopalians as well as Non-Conformists are so apt to confuse.

In regard to the sacraments, all 'Catholics' would

maintain unhesitatingly that Episcopal ordination for priests was a necessity of any valid consecration of the Presence of Christ, and valid sacraments are necessary to the being of a Church.

Many would say that Episcopal government was also a necessity of the Church. I do not, however, think this can be consistently maintained. Thus, we might feel that the old Irish Church where the abbot ruled the bishop, or some unhappy parish where the squire ruled the rector, was in a very wrong state, but so long as the sacraments were 'duly ministered in all things that are of necessity requisite to the same,' we should not deny that it was a Church.

The words *esse* and *bene esse* describe very well the difference between validity and effectiveness. *Esse*,—the thing is so or it is not. The ordinations of a bishop are quite clear acts; they are valid. They do give a priest power to do this thing. And the consecration is valid; it does create this presence. *Bene*,—it is more or less well. Episcopal government has certain advantages; it is more or less effective. In any case, effectiveness has nothing to do with the 'historic' nature of the episcopate, for the advantages of such rule will not be very different from those of a Lutheran 'superintendency,' or a Methodist episcopacy.

As a matter of fact the Church has dealt with these two sides very differently. The rule of the bishop has been qualified in a multitude of ways. First, it has been qualified from above. The bishop must keep the canons or rules of the synod of his province. Very often it has been qualified in various degrees by the authority of superior bishops—of the Bishop of Rome, of the patriarchs, archbishops and so forth. Secondly, it has been qualified, also in various degrees, from

below, by the rights of the people and the clergy. The Church never regarded the bishop as a sole unquestioned autocrat in his own right. So far as that idea has obtained amongst us, it is a result of our peculiar ' legalism.'

As regards the sacramental side of the office, the Church has never varied one particle. A valid sacramental Presence in communion can be consecrated only by one ordained thereto, and he can be ordained only by one—or several—who have received that special power of ordination by those who had received it before them. This rule, I might say, is recognised by—very nearly—everybody, for Non-Episcopalians, rejecting the rule, have always in the end, if not at first, rejected also the idea of ' validity ' in the sacrament.

(4) In a paragraph above we considered validity and effectiveness, but I left the term *right* for further consideration, because it was not merely the most important, but the most complex. I do not think one can give it a simple answer. With it I will take the difficult words, *Church* and *schism*, which are much simpler.

Certainly I, with all Episcopalians, hold valid sacraments to be a necessity of the Church. Nothing can be a Church without them, and I hold this for two reasons. First, I hold this reality to be an indispensable spiritual need of the Christian faith. I have given my grounds for that very fully. But there is a second reason. If we look at our mental processes, theories, observations, inferences, on any subject, we may say : ' all this mental activity implies a reality, which is beyond itself, prior to itself. Our thinking implies something thought about.' We might say with the witty man, that reality is so necessary to us that ' if it did not exist we

should have to invent it.' That, of course, is only a joke, for we have to recognise that it is of the very essence of reality that we cannot invent it. We must seek it, and learn it. This, which is the truth of all science, is the truth likewise of the Incarnation and of the Sacrament. Human need is the ground of their preciousness, but human need is not the ground of their being. They are, only because God makes them so. Holding this view of their necessity, I could not consistently admit that Non-Conformist bodies were Churches.

Further, to admit that the Non-Conformist bodies were Churches would be to admit there could be several Churches of Christ in one place, and this would be to give up the hope of unity.

I do not think that I need be misunderstood here. I think my brethren will recognise that my view of sacraments is at least reasonable, I have given many reasons for it. I think they will admit that from my reasons I could not reasonably come to any other conclusion. Similarly, I could not call any Non-Conformist body ' a Church,' since I hold that the Church is one—except in the sense of local divisions, as the Church in London is different from the Church in New York.

It would be different if I were asked to say they were ' part of the Church.' That brings me to the question of the term *schism*, and here also I will be perfectly frank. I hope I can trust my brethren too well to be afraid to say what I honestly think for fear I should hurt their feelings. It does not seem to me that anyone can call the Non-Conformists schismatics. They have not ' left the Church.' They are, for the most part, what they have always been.

Is a Non-Conformity schismatical?' That is a different question. If we take schism in its strict meaning, then I think we must say at least that our separation constitutes a schism. The word, however, in our mind implies an act of fault, and all Churchmen recognise that if men are driven out of the Church by unreasonable demands, the sin or act of schism is committed by those who drove them out. The driving out of the Non-Jurors constituted an act of schism, but the fault lay with the State, and with those who exercised authority on behalf of the Church. The separation of the Non-Conformists from the Church therefore formed a schism, but who was guilty of committing that act I am not competent, and I have no desire, to judge. No doubt there are people who do not see any disadvantage in our present condition of separation. The larger number, who realise it as an evil, might express themselves differently, but I believe they and I are here substantially agreed.

So far then as 'right' implies a judgment on the past, we can leave it on one side. We are only concerned with it as it affects our next steps. The common man would sum us up by saying that we were both right and both wrong. I believe, once more, that most of us agree. But our agreement is no use to us till we can find which is the right we ought to learn, and which is the wrong that we must give up.

If, now, we look back at all the questions we have discussed, we shall see that in every case, there is the same distinction constantly recurring. I urged first that we must distinguish between the gift of God and our appreciation of it or response to it. If our faith in God is to have any meaning, we must not imagine that our response *makes* the gift. We can apply to this a

phrase we have just discussed. The gift is the prior reality, the thing which *is*. The response is *bene*, more or less well, made. Christ by His death made for us one perfect propitiation, atonement, reconciliation with the Father. We enter into it by faith, or we reject it by unbelief; but we are not *doing* something, we are appropriating or rejecting a reconciliation made, which already *is*.

Turning to religious practice, I pointed out that this distinction of the gift was what we claimed for the sacraments, and that to them we applied the word 'valid,' as denoting the actuality or reality in itself of what was given, independently of our use. There is also an activity of the soul which proceeds from God's gifts, for while faith is a reception of something, faith also goes forth in action. In our common religion these two sides correspond to worship and preaching. Worship is the true inward act of receptive faith, the acknowledgment of and looking to what is. Sacramental worship is, of course, not the only kind of worship, but on our view of the sacrament it is much the highest and most perfect form, since the object of worship is presented to us, and not merely found in ourselves. There is a good deal of experience to show that the habit of worship—as distinct from intercession—is always weaker where the sacramental belief is not held.

Still less could we take preaching as the only form of the external activity of faith, but if we take preaching in its widest sense, it is a very important, perhaps the most important, form of that activity, and in a peculiar sense it voices the activity of faith, reflects, inspires, guides, explains, all its forms. I will take the sacraments and preaching as types of the two sides of ecclesiastical life which we have to consider.

There are then in the Christian life two different ideas, gift and response, which have in religion two different presentments, and in the Church two different ministries. Here is the ministry of consecration, whereby men are duly *authorised* to do that which God has commanded to be done on behalf of His people. Here is the ministry of preaching, wherein men by the inspiration of God's Spirit are *enabled* to stir up the thoughts and feelings of their brethren. Though different, it is not necessary that these should be separated. Is it, however, desirable ?

In the first place, I think for many reasons that it is not desirable they should be altogether sundered. A sacramental ministry entirely confined to formal duties would soon become very unspiritual. Sacraments and preaching are part of one life, and we must not let people get an idea that there is an opposition between the two. Certainly the official or sacramental ministry must be also a preaching ministry.

On the other hand, it seems even more undesirable that the sacramental and preaching ministry should be simply identified. If anyone does so, he knows little of their true nature, or of their innate difference. The official act is essentially simple. 'Take, eat, this is my body.' In one sense, like the death of Christ, it holds all the mystery of life. You may ponder it for years and find new meanings; you may worship for five minutes and It lies before you complete in one act. One celebration of what the old Fathers used to call 'the Divine Mysteries' is just the same as another.

Preaching, however, is infinitely varied with all the variety, not of the presentment of the mystery, but of our pondering upon the mystery presented, varied with all the variety of application and meaning any of us

can learn there to see. Fifty men may each preach fifty times from the same text and never have one sentence in common. The presentment to our worship of God's own gift, the gift of His Presence, is of God's own agent, but as the appreciation, the understanding that comes of reverent pondering, is the response God looks for in all, so it is for all to speak of that which God has given them. There is no least and shyest schoolboy who ought not to be ready, deeply blushing, to speak of Jesus Christ when the time is.

That, of course, is not the same as public speaking, but there is no real line of division between the two. If every man speaks of God as opportunity offers—and no one will deny that he ought to do so—the opportunities will depend very much on his ability. One man speaks to his friends and companions. If he has things to say worth listening to, his friends' friends will come to hear them. If they are very much worth listening to, he will speak in the market square or the town-hall or any other place.

I am much more concerned with another argument that this speaking or preaching—there is no fundamental difference between them—is not the same as official preaching. I maintained that the sacramental ministry must for its own sake also be a preaching ministry. The priest is always and above all an official, and I am going to maintain that there must be an official preaching. The arguments which to my mind prove that it has a real place in the Church, to my mind also prove that it is a limited place.

The clergy constitute a separate official caste. When I am speaking of my own cause, I am quite willing to let offensive terms like ' caste ' stand. We ought not to haggle over words, nor to let ourselves be scared by

their ugliness. Let us consider what a separated caste-priesthood really means, and can do. We shall find all its essential features reproduced even in the most Protestant missions. The English missionaries, amongst their Indian and African converts, are a caste and professionals and officials. They think differently, live differently, are paid differently, from their people. We can see that this has its disadvantages, but it has also its effectiveness. It is a gain that the growing Church should have in its midst a number of men who can suggest to it other and quite different ways of looking at things. It is even a necessity, for in that growing life there is a very real danger lest our converts should allow their Christianity to slide back into a mere phase of Hinduism or Fetichism. It probably would do so if it were not for the stubbornness of the English difference. The missionaries keep clear the line of the Christian distinction.

This does not arise entirely from the incomplete grasp of newly won faith. It is a universal law. The parson is narrow, professional. Religion dominated by clericalism becomes irrational and unreal, full of dogmatisms hard to be understood and of rules grievous to be borne. Be it so. The layman's religion is broad, practical, genial. Yes, but there is a reservation. It is natural and right that the religion which a man has to use in a practical world should have in it a vein of utilitarianism, yet that utilitarianism, which is so healthy and genial, is always in danger of losing that very character which none the less gives it all its life and meaning. The harvest of the apple tree grows on the branches in the sight of the sun and of all men. The root is a very wooden affair—twisted, tough, without commercial value; but in the winter storms,

when blossom, fruit and leaves are all gone, it holds on, or you will have no apples at all. All officials and all professionals, and we parsons among the number, are trying people. They look at things so differently, but that is what they are for. The really unfortunate part is that things want looking at differently ; geniality is a charming virtue, but sometimes we must be business-like. The clergy is also appointed to preach. Its preaching is likely to be of a kind less inspiring than that of the enthusiasts, but it will have qualities not less necessary.

CHAPTER X.

THE TWO PRINCIPLES OF MINISTRY.

MERELY that the length of the chapter may not be tedious, I have thought it better to divide my subject at this point. We can start on the examination of the work of the ministry with a fresh mind.

The official ministry has first to re-present Christ to us in the renewing of His Presence as the basis of our religious life, but we look to it also for an official preaching, which shall explain what has been done, which shall set before us in words those fundamental principles which the sacraments effect by act, but which in life lose the sharp edge of their distinction all too easily.

Fundamentals are very precious things, but we live *from* them, we must not cramp our life *in* them. The official preaching may be necessary, but it is not all we require. Official preaching is not an entirely easy thing. It must be lucid, or we shall not understand it ; it must be interesting, or we shall be bored ; practical, or we shall not be able to use it ; earnest, or we shall grow indifferent. But, above all, it must be correct, orthodox.

Beyond this efficient exposition of fundamentals lies another sphere which we might describe as that of originality and inspiration. We are first of all Christians, and the essential nature of Christianity remains

a fixed constant in all ages, yet Christianity is a life. It must be therefore a progress; its form is full of meanings and applications which are waiting to be realised. This is the place of originality, of development, of what I called 'freedom.' We are not, however, all original thinkers. Many of us, to be quite frank, are rather stupid and indeed rather lazy. Those to whom God has given the gift of 'vision' must—I will not say, do our thinking for us—but teach us how to think, stir us up to the joy of learning new things. This is the work of inspiration.

May not the official preaching be original and inspiring? Perhaps it may, and there are pretty sure to be officials who will be; nevertheless this is not what we ought to look for. There are reasons why it will be difficult and even undesirable that the official preaching should excel in those qualities.

Originality is in all cases individual; it belongs to individual abilities. But official preaching must be first of all official, and we ask of the official primarily that he should let us know, not what he himself thinks, but what is the message which has been committed to him. We ask our statesmen to devise new ways of meeting new situations. But we ask lawyers and judges only to tell us how the old legal principles apply to tangled circumstances. An official who is brilliant and original is a rather confusing person, for it is hard to tell how much is his own and how much is really of authority. An official may be inspiring, but it is rather his business to be critical of inspirations. He is not there to lead us up the road, but rather to warn us when a road which looks tempting is leading us away from our true direction. We are not bound to take his voice as infallible, nor is his authority absolute, yet it is

always of authority, it is always of the necessary principles, that he ought primarily to be speaking and reminding us.

It is really curious to notice how little consciousness we have of the principles on which we are all acting. I am going to examine two cases. (1) The bishop is the supreme official, the supreme representative of the official system. Churchmen deplore amongst themselves that the bishops do not lead. They are cautious and timid ; they are always the last to move ; they are a drag on the wheels. Non-Conformists may be excused for scoffing—'And this is the authority to which we are asked to submit our freedom ! ' Though Church historians tell another tale, it must be admitted that modern historians give the bishops and their councils a very bad record.

I am going to take a very daring course. I contend that that is all just as it should be, that in any case it is inevitable, and, in spite of our grumbling, that it is just as we want it to be. In the first place, the bishop *ought* not to be a leader. New ventures and new ideas imply a risk. They cannot be more than an experiment. The risks ought to be taken and the experiments made by little people who have nothing to lose except themselves. The big people, with big responsibilities, must watch from a distance. They must come and reap the benefits only of assured successes. This is good Trustee Law. It is part of the price paid for high office that you must leave the joy of adventure to others.

Again, it is inevitable. The bishop is not only the official head of the whole, he is the representative of the whole. Now the people with original ideas are few, but the whole consists mostly of a number of very

conservative people, who are not very quick at thinking, and who are too busy to have much time for it. It is this mass whom the bishop represents and for whom he acts. If he is ready to jump at new proposals, he will not represent them. And it is no use his taking up ideas till people are ready to move.

Of course bishops will make mistakes, like anybody else, and put the brake on the wrong things. Does this do any real harm ? If a new idea is really worth anything, it will generally win through without being much the worse for a little discouragement. At least it is a very effective reminder to the clever and original people that they are not the lords of God's heritage, but the servants of God's people. There is no need that bishops should be unsympathetic.

Of course bishops do make mistakes, and they are often unsympathetic, but one result of official responsibility is that they are much more sympathetic than the popular opinion. We grumble at officials because they do not lead, and because they dislike and discourage anything that is new. But they do not dislike it half so much as we do, so we grumble at them a great deal more because they will not ' stamp it out ' as energetically as we want them to.

Lastly, therefore, the inconsistency of our complaints shows how little we really mean by them. If anyone will consider, to make anything of a new idea or plan absorbs the labour of a life-time. If the bishop is to undertake that labour, what is to become of all the other new ideas and plans ? Plainly, no one man can lead them all at once. And what is to become of all the plain common work of administration ? A clever bishop with theories of his own is rather a nuisance. All our complaints really come to this. We want

authority to make everybody fall in with the ideas we like, and to drop those we don't like. Whereas the true business of authority is to keep us together, to make the very able wait for the slow, and to try to keep the slow from going to sleep. Of course we object equally to being kept back or pushed on, but I think we know such operations are necessary.

(2) What I have said about bishops applies in many ways to the clergy generally. We can see the immense difference in the idea of the official and the free ministries, if we consider the significance of our systems in regard to irremovability. The Non-Conformists take great pains to ensure that the men they choose for their ministry shall be really capable men. If a man proves incapable, it is always possible, and generally it is not very difficult, to get rid of him. In the Church we take amazingly little trouble to ensure capacity. And when a man has once been ordained, we think it absolutely wrong that he should take any other work except what can be counted as truly 'clerical.' Once a priest, he must always follow the life of a priest. If he receives a strictly ecclesiastical charge,—bishop or rector,—it is practically impossible to get rid of him without his own consent, except for grave fault.

To most Non-Conformists I suppose this will look like an inexplicable stupidity on our part. I do not say that there are no stupidities. We on our side would confess a great many, but I am sure if our critics will consider the matter they will see that a stupidity so uniform and continuous is inexplicable only because they have not got the key. Non-Conformists are thinking of spiritual development, which does require able leadership. We are thinking of something quite different. The ordained priest is not ordained as the able

leader, but as a man who has received a certain power, and that being once received he must spend his life under a responsibility, in regard to which personal abilities and efficiencies have no place.

The administration of the sacraments is not all we look for in our clergy. But then the normal official administration of parish work and the official preaching—for I am taking preaching as the type—being concerned rather with the fundamental ground-work of Christianity than with the developments of life, are relatively simple things. The first business of the parish clergyman is to feed the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made him overseer, and it is mostly a very commonplace flock with commonplace needs. Yet the priest is handling tremendous mysteries, and they are the flock Jesus Christ bought with His own blood. The very beauty and vision of Christianity is the glory hovering so simply over what is so commonplace.

No doubt there are many situations and opportunities which call for high ability, but for my own part I shrink from the aspiration, which possesses some of us, that the clergy should be all men of an ideal. I forget the census, but there are perhaps 20,000 clergy in England. If the Church turned up ideals on this scale, we average folk would hardly find room to breathe. I think there are few thoughtful Christians who will deny that we are all at the present day a world too fond of hankering after big men—which is perhaps one reason why we don't get them—and we have not half enough faith in the bigness of God's grace. We Anglican parsons are a very average lot, but it is for the average flock that we have to take thought. Some may say we are a very poor average. I daresay. I was a parish priest myself once and I know I was a

poor average, so I had better not deny it and I shall not resent it. We do our best.

I began by saying that to show there was a real place for an official system would also be to show that it was a limited place. I have just said that we 'Church' folk all readily admitted defects and stupidities in our system. Unfortunately we cannot agree which are the defects and what they come from. I can therefore only give my own view for what it is worth. To my mind, then, our defects arise from our not understanding our own system, and consequently not recognising its limitations. We have an official system, concerned with the fundamentals, and we use it as such. It needs to be supplemented by a free unofficial system, concerned with expansion, and this we have not got. We try therefore to make the official system do work for which it is not fitted, thereby greatly hampering its proper work, as well as confusing our own minds. I can make this clear by following up two applications to which I have already referred.

(1) Taking preaching as the type of activity, I insisted that we could not reasonably distinguish between public and private speaking. Everybody ought to 'preach.' I learnt to see the importance of this as I considered how the 'freedom' of everyone to speak lay at the root of that Non-Conformist idea which is common to all bodies.

I was the more ready to learn, for I had just learnt the same lesson from the missionaries. The English missionary goes to India, China, Africa, as a foreigner. He takes with him English Christianity. The fundamentals are the same, but the development and meaning put upon them are different. The missionaries are a caste. They have an important work to do by

ensuring that the Indian or Chinese Church shall not drift away from the fundamental basis. They are the critics of its growth. But after the first beginning has been made, the work of expansion lies with the Church itself. We do not want the heathen without to become English Christians, but Indian Christians, Chinese or African Christians, as the case may be. Therefore I contend that the true work of evangelisation, the making of converts, should be carried on by the Christians living there, and not by the missionaries. Only an Indian can really preach Indian Christianity to Indians, only a Chinaman to the Chinese, only an African to the Africans. The Christians will understand even an English missionary, for Christianity is a bond between them, but the English missionary preaching to heathens is not in his right place.

England is not a heathen country, and the difficulties are not quite the same ; yet the same general principle holds. Ministers of any denomination are a people apart. The religion of a man to whom religion is the main business of life, and the religion of a man who uses it to consecrate other business are bound to be different. Our own people feel the difference, though, since there is a common bond between us, they know how to get from ' the parson ' the help they want. To the unconverted the parson is a puzzle and often an absurdity. We want to make them lay Christians, and lay Christianity can only be rightly presented to them by lay men. The priest is the priest, and the minister is the minister, of God's Church. The lay Christian is the priest of God's universe, and it is mainly his business to preach to them that are without.

(2) In speaking of ' expansion ' so far, I am referring to an expansion outwards. There is also an internal

expansion in the development of Christianity itself, but all development is a matter of degree. Whether a man is trying to lead a Christian life is a relatively simple question. Certainly if a man is a Christian at all there must be some growth and some progress, but the capacity for growth or for one kind of growth rather than another is temperamental and therefore varies enormously.

I am trying just now to work out the relation of these different principles in a purely scientific way without regard to any conclusions which may be drawn from them. I ask my readers earnestly to consider them first from this point of view, and not to be in a hurry to reject them because the conclusions may be unpleasant. We shall come to them in the next chapter. Yet I am not studying merely abstract principles. I am comparing them with our experience, or rather I am trying to find the principles which underlie our experience. In our practical systems we are instinctively following certain principles. Our practice gets into confusion and develops defects, because we have no clear idea what its principles are, consequently, either we do not follow them out consistently, or we try to apply them where they do not apply. Thus, I urge as a scientific principle that Indian Christianity should be presented to Indians by Indians, and lay Christianity should be presented to lay-men by lay-men. I urge on scientific grounds, that there is, all the same, a real sphere to be filled by the English missionary in the one case, and the parson in the other.

Coming now to the question of spiritual development, I urge that if we are to get the best results, that development certainly needs helping, certainly needs a ministry. It is an essentially personal development, therefore it

does not belong to the essentially official sphere. Plainly, also, it is not the kind of thing which, like the primary work of 'preaching Christianity,' belongs to every Christian. It is addressed specially to those specially capable of it. It requires, therefore, special capacity, and it requires trained capacity.

I think then we can mark off three distinct spheres of Christian activity, all of which should be represented in the Church, and are necessary to the fulfilment of its proper life. (*a*) It is not the business of any one class more than another, it is the business of every Christian, to preach Christ daily and always by deed and word wheresoever opportunity occurs. In this, a professional ministry of any kind will be necessarily less effective than unprofessional people.

(*b*) The development of the Christian life requires the preaching, guidance and inspiration of men having a special capacity for it. Since this implies special knowledge and training, it will imply a professional class. As, however, the possibility of development, the need and kind of guidance required, vary so much, the system must be 'free' or voluntary, even although it may be organised.

(*c*) The more intense, enthusiastic, whole-hearted, this varied activity may be, the more necessary it is that it should be kept true to the Christian ground-work from which it proceeds. The maintenance of the Christian 'form,' which constitutes that ground-work, belongs to the official ministry, whose first business is to present it in the formal sacraments Christ has provided.

Our 'Episcopalian' Church provides an official ministry. It certainly is not true that she discourages her people from 'preaching Christ.' Our clergy constantly press this duty upon all. Here once more I

want to point out the working of a double-edged argument. In the first part of the book I pointed out that the Protestant system, having got rid of the positive sacramental Presence, had laid itself open to emotionalism, for emotion or feeling was the only witness of a Presence left. Protestant Evangelicals have frequently denied to me that their system was emotional, and have pointed to the constant warnings against emotionalism issued by their leaders. My reply was—warning or none, experience shows that this is its danger. The warning shows that the danger is plainly not an accident due to false leadership. It is an inherent defect in the system. I must in all honest consistency apply the same argument here. Our clergy do urge on people the importance of bearing their own witness. But experience shows that our people do it very little—less I should think than any body of Christians. Therefore, it is the system itself which is at fault. The whole idea of a free, spontaneous activity on the part of the body has, not of course altogether but to a deplorable extent, passed from us. All action has to be planned, pushed, and very often carried through by the officials.

The attempt to make the official system cover the whole ground has landed us all in utter confusion. The official, clerical, system has abundant opening and use for personal ability of all kinds, but, for the reasons I have given, we recognise quite well that it would be false to our principle to make personal ability the dominant factor. We cannot bring ourselves to employ the methods which the Non-Conformists employ to measure that ability. ' Preaching on approbation,' for instance, which to them seems natural and obvious, anyhow inevitable, is to us intensely repellent. Yet, the work thrown upon the clergy is such that it has

almost ceased to be an official system at all. The success of a parish depends on the personal ability, energy, attractiveness of its clergy.

In the same way, while we are most anxious to get more spontaneous activity out of our people, whenever it does show itself, we are all nervous over it unless it will work along the official parochial lines and under official direction. I cannot well justify myself without giving instances, and I cannot give instances without involving myself in particular controversies. Yet, if I must, I will refer shortly to three without discussing them at any length. (*a*) The Church of England Men's Society is our nearest approximation in England to a spontaneous unofficial activity. How far it will be able to develop its power remains to be seen. (*b*) The feebleness of our Church efforts in the missionary field seems plainly due to our over-absorption in official parochialism. (*c*) The most genuinely Church form of an organised 'free' activity has always been in the direction of Community Life in one shape or another. Our Church has never shaken off her suspicion of its devotion, nor found, even under the most favourable circumstances, the energy and enthusiasm necessary to make it a real factor in her life.

The results are too obvious to be denied; and no one does deny them. Our system provides and safeguards what is necessary to Christianity. To any new call our people—speaking only too generally—offer an uninterested 'Is it necessary?' Devotion, love which is self-sacrifice, the joy of giving, the enthusiasm which does great things, are all very necessary indeed, but anybody who asks for them under that name knows neither what they are nor where they live. For the whole most of us, I am afraid it is only too true that

we have lost the habit, lost the power, lost even the ideal of doing more than the minimum required, and that on due cause shown. It is easier to leave everything to be done by the clergy. The clergy regret but accept it, and at heart they rather prefer to do things themselves and in their own way. Does not that result seem to justify the Non-Conformist complaint that official control stifles spontaneous energy?

The confusion reaches its height in our training of the ministry, and I think I can show here that our deficiencies are due to confusion of mind and not to mere stupidity. The essential business of our official ministry is to maintain the essential Christian basis. It is not, of course, sufficient that the priest should know which are correct and orthodox phrases, and which are incorrect and heretical. People who have heretical theories, though they may argue with a parson, are not likely to listen to him. But any one of us or any one of his own people may be taking up ideas which tend to heresy or work out to heresy. The priest does need to know what is the meaning of the Christian basis, what are the relations of its parts to one another and to life, why the correct is correct, why it is important, how it can be applied to life and thought. There is ample room here for ability; a clear, level-headed, intelligent grasp of Christian meaning is sufficient, but that is indispensable.

The practical necessity of the parish system as it is being worked, however, has taken such hold of our minds that we can hardly think of anything for our clergy except of securing that 'wide general culture,' which is really needed for what I called the 'ministry of development.' We do take some, just the minimum of, pains to ensure that our clergy shall know the

correct form of Church teaching, but we take no pains at all to ensure that they have really thought out its meaning. The narrowness, only too common in our official preaching, is just the narrowness of men who do not know enough to trust themselves off set phrases.

Our real difficulty, therefore, has been and is that we realise the principles of our official system far too clearly to allow us to follow the methods which belong to a different set of ideals or aims, but we do not realise our principles well enough to follow what does belong to them. And for that difficulty there is just one cause. We have not got a Church system, but half a Church system, and we are therefore driven to force that half into attempting two incompatible functions—maintaining the single Christian ground-work which is common to everyone, and also pressing on that development of the Christian life which is of necessity so varied, and which moreover since it must be a spontaneous growth cannot be ' pressed on.'

I am not blaming our clergy nor our leaders. I am not suggesting that, as things stand, they ought to be doing or could be doing anything else ; I am rather urging that what is lacking is not a thing which the clergy can supply. The origin of our position I have already explained. At the Reformation the other, voluntary, side of the Church system was swept away. When a new voluntary system grew up, it grew up, not as complementary, but in opposition. The example of Non-Conformity has been some help to the Church, but its division from us has also made it a terrible hindrance, first by drawing off just those whose enthusiasm was wanted, and partly because the sense of opposition inevitably stiffens the opposed principle.

I want my method to be quite clear. I deny that I have on my own account brought one single charge against the Anglican system. The charges are in everybody's mouth. We may say some of them are exaggerated, and I have said so. But we all confess them, and I confess them. 'The Anglicans have all the starch.' I never said that. We deny, I deny, that there is *no* fire in us; but we admit and I admit that our system is very stiff and inelastic. I have only tried to show that the faults are not faults of the individuals, but that there is a common reason underlying them all. Stiffness is a necessity in anything, but the same system cannot provide both the stiffening and the elasticity.

If my thesis is correct,—that the two sides of basis and development, the two systems official and voluntary, are necessary to one another,—having shown how deficient the official is without the voluntary I ought to be able to show parallel defects in the voluntary system apart from the official. This, however, I cannot do adequately. I have been a 'Protestant,' and I can speak of the difficulties of Protestantism with some confidence, but I have never been a Non-Conformist, and I only know its practical result and working from outside. But it is not necessary that I should speak adequately. If Non-Conformists are not willing to give my argument sympathetic and serious consideration, I shall only excite useless ill-feeling by trying to justify myself by accusations which they will not admit. If they are willing to meet me, I can—in the end I must—leave it to them to judge how far the real difficulties in their system correspond to the causes I have assigned.

I think, however, I can suggest three difficulties in the Non-Conformist system which are generally

acknowledged, and which have some special interest from the light they throw on the principles of the system itself.

The first is the lack of independence in the ministry. It is the essence of Christianity that it rests on a basis, not of human thought and action, but of something God-given. If there should be a ministry primarily concerned with the maintenance and presentment of that common basis, it would be quite natural that it should be a ministry which—even if it were appointed by the Christian people—does not receive its power from them. The development of Christian life and thought, however, would be a human development and varied. For reasons I have explained elsewhere, I still call it human, even though it may be guided by the Holy Spirit. It is natural, therefore, that the ministry of that development should be appointed and controlled by the group or body of Christians ministered to. A minister out of sympathy with those special developments which appeal to his people will not be able to help them. This difference between the two ministerial systems is that which we find, and it is thus explicable.

Is the position of the Non-Conformist ministry right ? I do not think anyone will deny that it is full of danger. Except where the minister is a man of such acknowledged power that he can stand above criticism, the control which ensures that he shall give what his people need often becomes a power which ensures he shall say only what they like. Now, of course, whether it be of wealthy patrons, or of an influential group, or of a majority, or of general feeling, power will always make itself felt. Our own ministry is not free from its influence, but at least the Church system not only rests upon the ideal that the minister may and must speak

truth, popular or unpopular, but, if it cannot secure for him the courage to speak, at least it does secure for him the necessary independence of position. The Non-Conformist system does not. A number of ministers have called their position an intolerable servitude.

I believe the majority of Non-Conformists would reply that they did not deny that there are defects or disadvantages in this direction, but that the servitude of the minister to the people was a less evil than the servitude of the people to the minister, which occurs under our system. Exactly! Each system secures something; each has its disadvantages. Those disadvantages have grown into very serious evils. We cannot even start combating those evils effectively, because that would be giving points to the other side. In a real unity the weaknesses of one system are redeemed by the strength of the other; in disunion, the weakness of each protects itself, and grows by the weakness of the other. I believe that the popular control of the Non-Conformist ministry is the natural, inevitable, right and consistent result of a sound principle. It is only a serious evil, and I believe it is a serious evil, because it stands by itself. I make exactly the same admission of the principle of our ministry.

(2) The second defect of Non-Conformity, I should say, was its emotionalism. It appears, of course, in very different degrees in different bodies. The Presbyterians hardly show it at all in the form commonly so described.

But this point raises a very curiously significant question. All the most thoughtful Evangelicals are fully alive to the danger of emotionalism, so much so indeed that in controversial moments they will even deny that it exists as a danger.

Evidently 'emotionalism' has a very bad name. Many prefer to speak of 'feeling,' though for my own part I cannot see the difference. Neither can I see why emotionalism should be thought badly of. Something is done, or something happens. It excites us to a three fold response, of thought, action, feeling. To act without thinking is foolish, and the instinct of mere activity is so far a danger. But to think without doing anything is feeble, and mere thought is also a danger. The same is true of mere emotion or feeling, but it is not more true than of the others.

The real danger of the Non-Conformist system is that of substituting the human activity for the divine gift, the response for the thing which is responded to. It may not always take the form of emotion, though emotion is for divers psychological reasons much the easiest as it is also the pleasantest to come by. I do not want to say much on this subject here, because I have said so much elsewhere.

(3) My third suggestion lies in a doctrinal direction, and of this also I will not say much, because I want to give it some consideration presently. I said that the first business of official teaching was to be correct or orthodox, and I was fully conscious that I should raise a smile, and in many cases a smile of contempt. But why?

If I wanted to find an absolutely conclusive argument and instance of the mischief being done to our whole life through these miserable divisions and the essentially 'party' mind which they create and maintain in us, I could not do better than offer these two words—emotion and orthodox. Emotion is one of the most glorious things in the world, one of the best of God's gifts. Then somebody must go and *oppose* it to what he

calls ' the cold and hard logic of reason.' Then, of course, the logically minded people take their revenge by talking of ' the emptiness of emotionalism.' Surely the truth of life is quite plain. Emotion suggests to us the significance of a question. The cold hard logic of reason is only another term for cool dispassionate judgment concerning the significance. When the judgment has been made, the emotion of enthusiasm is necessary for whole-hearted and resolute action. Reason is just the one thing which justifies us in letting emotion have full play. The only result of our empty quarrel is that we are all afraid of emotion, look the other way, call it ' feeling,' as if emotion was something to be ashamed of ! And we are no less afraid to think steadily for fear we should be ' logical,' which is not our most besetting sin.

This is equally true of orthodoxy, for I do not suppose that anyone likely to listen to me would seriously contend that there was no place for orthodoxy. Nevertheless, most of us would be as much ashamed at being thought orthodox, old-fashioned or traditional, as at being thought emotional. Once more, why ? Is the superstitious idolatry of mere orthodoxy one whit more unreasonable than the superstitious idolatry of the modern and the novel ? ' We want progress and evolution.' I do not think any the worse of that inspiring statement because there is a fine old Victorian ring about it. Yet we are in a hurry to clear away the past, nervously patronising, anxious to prove that we have nothing really to learn, for we are bent on having an entirely new thing of our own. ' The Zeit-geist breathes upon it and it is gone.' We need not wait for the next generation. Our new thing is all forgotten in a few years, because there is another thing still newer. ' They

that take the sword shall perish with the sword.' A perpetual succession of fresh starts is neither progress nor evolution. A great deal of our very newest Christianity bears a suspicious resemblance to our very oldest pre-Christian heathenism.

'Christianity has a message to modern thought, to the new age.' That is far nearer the truth. Let us only be sure that the message is Christian, for a Christianity reconstituted by the new age has for the age no message and no gospel. It can bring to it only what it took from it.

What has all this to do with the Non-Conformist ministry? I think it has a great deal. 'The dominant factor of Non-Conformity is the body, of which the ministry is only the expression. Why should it be contended that the ministry alone should maintain the conservative element of Christian faith?' It can be contended that it is for the body—ministers and people together—to maintain the unity of Christian faith.

I have tried to show that there is a certain Christian truth or message which is fixed and in Christ God-given; there is also an expansion or growth, by the Spirit God inspired. It had not occurred to me, I learnt from the Non-Conformists to realise, that this growth could not be amorphous—merely in the body as a whole. It wanted its own organisation, its own professionalism, its own ministry. If this is true, then it is equally true that some form or organisation is necessary to keep before the Church what is fixed and given. But the ministry which acts as the expression of the body cannot be simply identified with the ministry which is concerned with the presentation of what is given to the body.

It may of course be pointed out that the existence of a ' fixed ' ministry has not defended us from having the same hankering after what shall be purely modern. Nothing but the eternal Spirit of God will ever deliver men from temptation, but the forms the Spirit has provided may be a great help in combating it. I think experience shows that relatively speaking we are less troubled in this direction. Indeed I thought myself justified in assuming that our temptation lay in the opposite direction.

I maintain, therefore, that there are two sides of Church life, just as there are two sides of the life of every one of us. They appeal to different types of mind in different ways and degrees, but they cannot rightly be treated as merely alternative or merely temperamental, for just this reason, that all individual powers are given for common use. Turned to personal indulgence and self-choice they are but a swift means of ruin. Let a man have the character of a saint and the insight of a seraph, yet that man shall perish eternally and cannot be saved unless he is content to enter the Kingdom of heaven on that common Christian ground where the child and the ignorant and the fool may stand with him side by side.

Nevertheless, every man, for what he is, must have his proper development and must be provided with the means of that development. I have not tried merely to accumulate disputed facts, but I have tried to show by analysis of common forms, of the criticisms we bring one against another, and of the arguments we allege for our own position, that all our difficulties spring from an attempt to make one side do duty for both, and that any religious condition which does so involves itself in heresies, schisms, confusions without

end, evil sheltering itself behind the opposite evil, unreason defending itself because it is not more unreasonable than the opposite unreason. 'Wilt Thou not turn again and quicken us, O Lord, that Thy people may rejoice in THEE?'

CHAPTER XI.

IS A SYNTHESIS POSSIBLE?

Let me summarise my idea of the position before us, once more beginning from an analogy. As a nation we all recognise we must have an official class concerned with that which is fundamental, necessary to the maintenance of a national fabric. We must all pay taxes and keep the law, therefore we must have tax collectors and police. There may be other things, such as posts and perhaps railways, which are so necessary to us that we had better make them into public services. Inside the shelter of this fabric, however, we are carrying on a life of expansion and development and movement, which must be free. It may be an organised development, and its organisations will produce other professional classes, but they will not be official in the same sense, since they will be concerned with voluntary and not with necessary activities, with things which are or may be worth doing, but which are either not necessary or not necessary in one particular way.

Of course the conclusion to which I am tending will be quite evident. The Church, if she is to reach the fulness of her life must have—and when she has reached it she will have—both an official sacramental ministry and a 'free' ministry, organised and unorganised, such as that which Non-Conformity supplies to-day

and the Friars supplied of old. I only state that as a principle, but I mean to imply what I seem to imply—a mutual recognition, for the true way to reach that fulness of life is by the re-union of those who have possessed themselves of the two severed factors. After three centuries of dominant officialism, for the Anglican Church to develop an effective free system would be an enormously slow business. I do not say that it would be impossible. To God anything is possible, and if our brothers refused to join us I believe in the end it would be done, but to try to provide for ourselves what God has already given to others does not seem to be the right way.

This suggestion of mine will, I expect, meet with a rather diverse reception. There is a crowd of onlookers who will eagerly accept the apparently simple conclusion to a troublesome question. Mutual recognition —is not that what they have always urged upon us? And really, after all, the difficulty has always been on the Church side. Now that we have this startling admission from one who speaks as a Catholic, they hope it will be listened to.

After what I have said above, it should not be necessary for me to say anything in reply to this view, yet even earnest people often find it hard to get their minds clear as to the meaning of accepted phrases. I must, therefore, point out that though it talks of 'mutual recognition,' this easy popular view does not mean recognition at all. Is that what either of us want? Are we both to be tolerant? Very well, but do either of us want to be tolerated? We want love, unity, help. Is it the same thing if in disunion and disaccord we are both bound over to keep the peace?

Are we not concerned with spiritual reality and

therefore with spiritual truth? If so, we cannot discuss the question as if it could be settled by a give-and-take arrangement. We are not commercial men making a bargain, nor politicians framing a policy. Each of these no doubt must be ready to forego much he would like, and to accept things he does not like, as the reasonable price of the advantages which others will give him. It is, however, impossible for us to approach one another by saying: 'We will agree to treat that as true —though we don't think it is,—if you will agree to treat this as true—though we know you don't believe it?' Frankly, our old antagonism and strife, ruinous as it was and is, seems to me far better than the peace of acquiescence. We quarrelled because we were sure that our division was not right, and we wanted to make an end of it somehow. A quarrel over difference is regrettable, but at least hopeful; an amiable indifference to difference is ruinous because hopeless.

It is for this reason that I dread so much those premature efforts, not so much to close as to hide our differences by occasional services of 'inter-Communion' or 'interchange of pulpits.' I do not believe Non-Conformists care about these things any more than we do. It is almost an insult to their forefathers as to ours to believe that we can by our superior wisdom simply drop all for which they believed themselves to be contending.

There are real differences, full of real lessons and real significances, and there is a real division over which we cannot too deeply grieve. If we would heal that division, we must carefully face and study the differences. To ignore them is not only to perpetuate the division indefinitely, it is to repudiate on both sides all that real and living faith with which the difference

is concerned. We are declaring that the mere human feeling of good-fellowship constitutes all the unity we care about. To anyone who realises the sacramental meaning, kneeling before one altar in the full sense of its meaning is not a way of reaching unity, but its whole attainment. However much we long to draw nearer, where that meaning is not accepted, where anyone feels he cannot yet accept it, I am sure neither of us ought to, I am sure none of us would wish to, degrade the true unity of faith and soul into a similarity of physical postures.

I turn therefore to the genuinely religious question. In urging this full acceptance by both sides I am afraid I shall damage my reputation for consistency, and my reputation for seriousness by a proposal which both sides, though for opposite reasons, regard as utterly impossible. I will try first to consider the Episcopalian objections, not so much in the hope of answering them, but rather because they will give me an opportunity of considering what the admission of free preaching would really involve. Then we will consider the Non-Conformist objections in the same way. Though I cannot prove, and it is not my place to say whether, unity is possible on these lines, at least we shall get some idea of what is implied in their rejection.

The first protest then comes from the Episcopalian side. Do I really contemplate the Church allowing all and sundry, wise and foolish, well-taught and ill-taught, to preach as much as they like and anything they like, heresies and orthodoxies, without control? And yet that is what my notion of pure freedom comes to.

I do not want this question to get more tangled than I can help, therefore let me note that I did not begin

by making any proposal at all. I found certain convictions which I held very strongly, and in apparent opposition other convictions which were somewhat new to me. When I began to ask what there was in human nature or in the nature of societies to explain these different convictions, they seemed to correspond to the difference of fact and appreciation, sight and understanding, law and freedom, form and development. In theology they seemed to correspond to the work of Christ and the fulfilment of that work by the Holy Spirit. In religion we found them again, repeated in the distinctive ideas of Sacraments and preaching.

Certainly these differences must be confusing, since we find people constantly confused about them. Those who love understanding things, philosophising about them, are apt to be impatient and careless over their facts; those who love development are apt to forget that there must be something to develop. Similarly, the people who love facts are apt to forget that they want understanding; those who love law are apt to forget life. Yet, one way or another, we know that we have got to lay our count with both sides. I am not so far, therefore, inventing difficulties in this question; I am merely pointing out that the difficulties which do exist are of a certain common type. Nor, finally, can I be held responsible for the possibility or impossibility of a reconciliation, merely because I insist that we need in religion the same reconciliation which we have to make elsewhere.

Let us not theorise about the matter, but examine it. Our starting point is not a proposal that everybody ought to be allowed to preach as much as he likes (or can), but the fact that at the present day everybody does, whether he knows what he is talking about or not.

The workman talks to his mates and the club-member talks in the smoking-room. Sometimes they both write to the papers, and sometimes the sub-editor of the *Daily Rattletrap* writes it for them, and they only say what a deep and original thinker he is. Can we stop it? Do we want to? In the Middle Ages it could be stopped, and perhaps it may not have been all evil, since there is a time for everything. To-day it cannot be stopped, and personally I have no doubt at all that it is better it cannot. If people read their Bibles or anything else, and think or even imagine they are thinking, many of them will think amazing foolishness, but it will not be half so foolish as it would be to try and stop their reading their Bibles or to stop their thinking. If people think foolishly, the true remedy is first to rejoice that at least they are trying to think, and next—as S. Dominic saw long ago, would he had stuck to it!—to set to work to help them to think straight. When you see a man drowning, all right instinct forbids that you should stop to inquire as to his economic value to the community. Life has possibilities, which make it always precious even when it is the meanest, and intellectual life is precious for the same reason, even when it is silly.

Our Lord's teaching lays down the theological principles, and emphasises no less the practical applications, on which this view of our duty rests. 'I am come that they might have life,' and this life is in the gift of His Spirit. Growth, development, spontaneous activity, are His operation. Again, it is spoken: 'Ye shall know them by their fruits.' By that we may see how much is not the work of God's Spirit, but of human levity and self-will. Yes, that also is true. 'An enemy went and sowed tares.' The test is a right one,

but let both grow together till the harvest. It must needs be that causes of stumbling come. They are part of the discipline of life, of its training in wariness and seriousness.

We have then to admit that these activities and 'preachings' of one sort or another do go on and we have to allow for them, but the Episcopalian challenge really means, is the Church to give them her recognition? Here I think we are getting involved in another and very troublesome ambiguity. What is the Church? I pointed out that the community must undertake certain duties which were necessary to her existence, but that she left our private undertakings free. The town collects its own rates, and it runs its own tram-lines, but I run my own boiler factory.

Yet, in another way of speaking, my factory is one of the industries 'of the town.' Certainly the town makes it possible, maintains streets for my lorries, workmen for my machines. From this point of view also, the town does not really run the tram-line nor even collect its rates. Both are done for it by official committees or departments of the governing body, over whose doings so much of the community as is interested may or may not be able to exert control. It would therefore be more accurate if, instead of speaking of community activities and free activities, we spoke of the free activities and the official activities of the community.

We have not, therefore, to ask whether the Church should recognise free preaching, but whether it should be recognised officially. There seems no reason why the Church should recognise it in this sense. I do not ask the town council to give 'recognition' to my boiler factory, but I might if there was some

very special reason for it. The State recognises the railways, and used to recognise the telephone companies, because these things had become in some ways necessities.

The word 'recognition' may evidently be used in many senses. I have pointed out already that the Church must and ought to maintain her own official preaching. There will be and ought to be a great deal of free preaching, or free talking, which neither asks nor expects recognition, and for which the Church is in no way responsible. Some of this preaching may organise itself. If it organises a false teaching, we Churchmen should regret it, but so far as organisation itself goes, we are always regretting that the Church shows relatively so little capacity for organised spontaneous development. Even when developments are organised for her, she cares so little for them—perhaps for the very reason that having been made for her, they are not spontaneous.

How far could we take such bodies as the Wesleyans or Congregationalists to represent a genuine Church development? How far could the Church 'recognise' them? What would such 'recognition' involve?

Let us consider these questions carefully. We are starting from our own assumption that there is a foundation of divine sacramental gift, 'generally' necessary, that is normally necessary for all, and that the administration of this gift is the first work of an official system, that is, of those to whom the power of consecration has been duly given. We are next assuming that there might be a free and varied outgrowth from that foundation, which had developed also an organisation. Obviously, an organisation which denied that there was any such sacramental gift, and which did not

accept that gift as a foundation, could not ask for recognition from the system, the principles of which it was repudiating. Nor could the system grant such recognition. It would be, as I have also pointed out, impossible to recognise the organisation as doing effectively what its own members do not believe ought to be or can be done.

Suppose, however, that the free organisation did accept the principles of the official sacramental system, the organisation would then develop its own life out from the sacramental system, in harmony with it and not apart from it, whether the organisation was formally recognised or not. If, however, it were recognised, a great deal of useful co-operation would ensue. Some of the ministers of the organisation might be ordained. If so, they become a supplementary part of the official system, both in its sacramental and teaching activity. On the other hand, it might be better they should not be formally recognised.

Arrangements of this kind already exist to some extent in the Church. An institution stands in a parish—a large boys' home, a boarding school, barracks, in some cases a large work with its employées. It is too large and too specialised to be dealt with by the parish clergy. Those responsible provide a room where prayers can be said, addresses given, and they take a certain spiritual oversight of their own people. If circumstances call for it, they may provide a chaplain and a chapel for the administration of the sacraments. Now recourse must be had to the bishop. Official license must be obtained, and such arrangements as seem necessary must be made to avoid clashing with the parish Church.

To apply this method to the Non-Conformist bodies

would be of course a much bigger business. The effects would be much more serious. Extra-parochial services—cathedral services, collegiate services, foundlings' hospital services—are rivals to the parish, and we should increase the rivalry indefinitely. Yet there is nothing new. So far as the principle goes we have it already. So far as the question of scale goes, we have not a friendly rivalry within the Church, but something like an active antagonism from without. Have not our attempts yet proved to us that one single official system cannot be made to satisfy all the developments of the Christian life? If we admit that, is there any reason why the official system and the official preaching should not continue for the very many whom it suits, and that those whom it does not suit should be otherwise provided for?

'Friction?' Of course there would be friction. One feels inclined to say that the double system would hardly be doing its work if there were none, but anyone can see in any sensibly worked town parish how little real need there is for it. 'These are my parish boundaries and my parishioners,' says the vicar. These are the people who have a certain canonical right to his services. There is a large mass to whom he must personally devote himself, for they have so little religious sense that if he does not there is no one else to reach them. Amongst the more religiously minded, he knows equally well that a large number prefer to go to the next parish for their services; some from the next parish come to his. These are mostly people who are quite capable of taking care of themselves, and we clergy, being also reasonably sensible, let them. We do not quarrel with one another about it. Why should we quarrel with the 'free' ministries? We do quarrel now, because

we cannot agree about the place and value of different principles. Once we have realised that the different principles have each their own value in different places, and have realised what those places are and how the principles are related, there will be no *need* that we should quarrel.

I only say no ' need,' for as long as men are human, so long will they always find some excuse for being a little jealous. It is natural to resent anybody else having a try at what we think we can do quite well. Yet we all know quite well that there is never just one way and no more of doing things and looking at them. The want of spontaneous energy, which we all deplore among our people, is a proof that our official system is not by itself enough if we are to get the best results. Is not our dread of another system also a proof that a system too exclusively official has led a little too much to officialism ? The parish is made for man, and not man for the parish.

There are many things spiritual and practical which want doing, many ways of doing things and many ways of looking at them. This is the place of variety, and it is disastrous to make it the place of uniformity. There is one thing done for us, one thing given to us, and there is but One to Whom we have to look for help and strength. There is the ground of unity. Once we have found unity I believe we can safely trust our own and other folk's common sense, as we do in our parishes to-day. The difference of the voluntary system will do a good deal to deliver us from the stiffness of our officialism. We clergy shall always be officials ; we shall always have an official way of looking at things, and that is good. But we want to get out of our bondage to it, for that is evil.

So far, in the last few pages, I have been speaking mainly to Episcopalians, and I have tried to show that there is no real reason why we should not, and that there are a great many reasons why we should, admit the right of free preaching, free organisation, free activities, alongside of those which are official. It is true that we have never formally excluded such things, we have indeed professed to desire them and to welcome them. I am afraid we must confess that in practice we always discourage them. We only welcome them when they will submit to the dominance of the official system; that is, when the free system will consent to give up its freedom. I do not suppose that I shall have persuaded all Episcopalians of the necessity of another line of action. We have grown so accustomed to that ideal of the necessity of official governance that it is exceedingly difficult for many of us to contemplate anything else. I am even afraid that many will find it difficult to be patient with an Episcopalian who proposes anything else. They will think that I am surrendering the whole Church position if I say—as I do say—that to my mind this is where we have been in error.

Yet so far I am speaking to my friends—more or less about a position I understand. I also maintained that there could be no unity and no recognition, unless it was mutual. The Church, as a sacramental body, could only recognise and accept the principle of freedom so maintained and practised by Non-Conformists, where they recognised and accepted the Church principle and practice, that is, our doctrine and system of Church sacraments. Here, where I have so much less claim to understand, I am afraid I shall be met with a much more emphatic answer. 'We cannot possibly accept.

your sacramental doctrine and system, and it is utterly useless to ask it.'

Perhaps it is, but at least let us be sure what this answer means, and what is involved in it. What exactly is impossible and what our future position is to be. A clear understanding will be a great gain, even if there is no other to be had.

A thing may be impossible in three ways. (*a*) It may be impossible because we will not do it. We might call that a Conditional Impossibility. It is only impossible so long as our minds remain in this state. Again, (*b*) a thing may be impossible because we cannot do it. We might call that a casual or Accidental Impossibility. When we get wiser or stronger, or get a few more helpers, perhaps we may succeed. Lastly, (*c*) a thing may be impossible because it really cannot be done. We might call that the Fundamental or Absolute Impossibility. It is not always quite easy to be sure to which class any given difficulty belongs, and until we know we need not quite give up hope.

At present we will not attempt to classify this impossibility. Let us go on to ask what is involved in it. How will it affect the question of unity which so many of us on both sides desire so earnestly ? How would Non-Conformists wish that we should join them ? Do they want us to surrender our convictions ? I am not without hope that many will feel with me that surrendering convictions is a dangerous course to start on, and one which can hardly reasonably be asked. Many I know are quite prepared to say that they are quite willing we should follow our convictions, only that they are not willing we should force our convictions on them. What they ask is mutual toleration of differences.

This seems ever so simple, yet I am prepared to show

that it is in fact an Absolute or Fundamental Impossibility. Let us consider. A thing is Absolutely Impossible which is so entirely inconsistent with itself that it could not exist, and that nobody could seriously think of it. If a man thinks of a triangle, he cannot think of it as having four sides, for if it had four sides it would not be a triangle.

Contradictions of this kind are only possible when men do not quite realise their meaning. The old-fashioned Non-Conformists held the Catholic view of the Sacrament to be idolatry, a dishonouring of God, against which they were bound to protest. That was intelligible and it is still perhaps a very common attitude, but the proposal I am now considering does not seem to me self-consistent. If it be true that God gave Himself in the way we believe, then the Non-Conformists and we must accept that truth as a factor in our daily religious life and worship, just as we accept the Incarnation and the Atonement in our Christian faith. If it is not true, then Non-Conformists ought not to tolerate it. We must ask them to deliver us from vain belief. It can hardly be contended that a means of God's actual Presence, which in fact does so profoundly affect our lives, is of no importance. Of course, if we have not made up our minds which way the truth lies, toleration is perfectly right because hesitation is perfectly reasonable, but hesitation cannot be the basis of a permanent re-union.

When we look closely, therefore, it does not seem to me that the proposal for mutual toleration has any serious meaning just in the shape in which it is put. If, however, we look more sympathetically at the causes which have led to it, we may see some very serious meanings indeed.

A long and sad history of controversy, a growing consciousness of our own failures and needs had called up in many of us a doubt whether we could, whether God meant to let us, win that decisive triumph over the other of which at one time we were so confident, and for which some still hope. With an increased humility and self-distrust, and with the increased knowledge of fuller intercourse, we have not only learnt to feel personal admiration and respect, we have begun to see that there was good also in the systems which were different to our own, begun to see that those systems were strong where ours were weak. We have begun to recognise that we had a great deal to learn.

I take that last sentence to be the key of the position. It is a sentence very commonly on our lips. Sometimes it is honestly meant. At other times it and similar remarks are only empty platitudes, the formal compliments of religious etiquette, which a man must use who wishes to be thought broad-minded, but which express only his clear perception that admiration is cheap and politeness easy, though he has no intention of doing anything, for that would be very troublesome indeed. Insincerity is just the sin that doth so easily beset us. It is morally soothing to admit that we are worthless sinners, and it is intellectually elevating to admit we have indeed much to learn, but resentment in the one case, controversy in the other, are as open as ever the moment we descend from the general to the particular.

The foolishness, the mischievousness, of platitudes does not lie in themselves but in us, and in our misuse of them. They are a confession and a reminder, even if we make them an excuse for forgetting, what we

ought to mean. The man signs himself 'your humble servant,' because it is a form, and it is a form because we know that is the relation in which we should stand to one another. These remarks about our having much to learn and so on may be mere platitudes to many, but I do not like to take them so. I had much rather believe that on so serious a question they were seriously meant. In any case, they imply a recognition of the way up which unity ought to come.

Without wishing to bind anyone to my view, suppose we admit that the Churchman excels in reverence and the Non-Conformist in energy. Then each will need to learn from the other to strengthen himself on the weaker side. But how is he to learn? What is it he has to learn? Of course it might be that we had both failed in different ways to appreciate the whole Christian ideal, but I hardly think anybody would so contend. Certainly I have never found Churchmen lacking in their admiration for energy, nor do I suppose that Non-Conformists need to be instructed in the beauty of reverence. It would be absurd to imagine that among so many millions all the reverent people had been born on one side, and all the energetic people on the other, and we know further that people do not sort themselves out into religious bodies according to character. If then the difference of results is not in ideals but in attainments, and the cause is neither chance nor choice, but up-bringing, the answer to our question is plain. The difference lies not in the individuals, but in the system. Each system has something which is worth learning whereby it has made the common ideal effective, and each has something it needs to learn and to acquire, for therein its attainment is defective. That is the only meaning we can put upon the phrase.

On this conviction I have been working throughout. I have tried to find what was the vital element and the true strength of each system, what was the nature, and thence to infer what was the cause, of its weakness. In result it seemed to me that the central convictions of both sides were justified. It is perhaps over twenty-five years ago that I began to see how much our daily religious life needs to rest upon the solid foundation of the sacramental gift, the objectivity of which is maintained by the sacramental order of its administration. The importance of the Non-Conformist side, of the organisation of a voluntary and spontaneous life, I have learnt more slowly and more recently. It was only possible to maintain both these as one realised that the two were necessary to one another. The formal and sacramental by inadequate development remains formalist and ineffective. The free life apart from the sacramental is unstable, emotional, individualistic.

If then where an opposition exists, I yet show that both are right, I must thereby show that both are wrong. But with this difference, that while the justification was of our convictions, the condemnation—if I must call it one—was of our negations. The Non-Conformist was wrong in protesting against sacramentalism, and the Episcopalian was wrong in protesting against voluntaryism. We both knew the value of what we held and of what God had given us. Neither of us was sufficiently conscious of what he lacked, of what God was willing to give. I have only gone beyond the platitude that ' both are right and both are wrong ' by trying to make quite explicit to myself, and if I could to others, what was right and why, and what was wrong and why.

I am not of course pretending that I have done my part with unfailing accuracy. There may be more than this that we need to learn from the Non-Conformists; there may be more than this that they need to learn from us. I think for my own part that these are at least the two central principles, but supposing that when we have thought about it a little more fully we find a result something of this kind, taking my statement for want of a better, how shall we face it? I fully admit that it would be very difficult for Non-Conformists to accept a system against which they have always protested as idolatrous, just as it would be very difficult for Episcopalians to accept a system they have always protested as schismatical, but are we to say it would be impossible?

If so, then our enquiry, though it has not ended as we should have wished in bringing re-union any nearer, will at least have done some service; it will have helped to clear away some needless confusions. We get rid of the idea, and of the misleading phrase, about both having a great deal to learn. Unless we are prepared to confess that we have not the will nor the capacity to learn, we must take the only alternative. There may be in others something to admire, but one of us, except perhaps in details of system, has nothing, the other has everything to learn. Protestants and Catholics, Catholics and Protestants—one is wholly right and the other wholly wrong. We must again betake ourselves to our arguments till one body is wholly converted and disappears. There always have been those on both sides who took this view, which is now justified.

Obvious as the conclusion may be, and in some circles popular, it yet provides no answer for the scientific question—how is it that both systems have

gone on side by side, both developing so much effective power, for so long a time, though one was wholly wrong ? Is human perversity a sufficient explanation of such a phenomenon ?

The scientific question we might perhaps ignore. It is more difficult to ignore that large mass of simple people who are pleading with us—' If one body is wholly in the right, and yet you, who are so deeply interested and often so highly trained, cannot convince one another, who are we to decide between you ? ' Surely there must be some better answer for them than that somewhat hopeless prospect of our old differences.

I must repeat my point. Either the sacramental gift is a fact, and the necessary basis of religious life, or it is not. Either some free development is necessary to the fulness of Christian life in the Church or it is not. In this shape the question must be answered one way or another. If we cannot agree, we must differ, for questions about necessity cannot be waived aside. That each, holding fast its own convictions, should unlearn its repudiations—before we call that impossible —at least let us see what possibility is claimed for it, what limitations of possibility must be admitted.

Is this proposal ' practical politics ? ' Certainly not. It is not a matter of politics at all. If anyone supposes that we might bring the suggestion forward at our congresses, conferences, synods, with a view to an early settlement, so that perhaps when the Lambeth Conference meets in 1918, our bishops may agree to recognise the freedom of Non-Conformist preaching, while the Non-Conformists accept our sacramental doctrine, of course such an idea is wholly impossible, preposterous, absurd—I should say Fundamentally Impossible.

It is not a question of politics, for it must be in the first place a question of temper, that is, of mental outlook. Unity of the kind I am hoping for is impossible—with a Conditional Impossibility—so long as we are thinking of something we may have to give up. Would it not be different if we began by trying to be sure what we had to give, for, starting thence, should we not be led to think also of what we had to gain or to learn?

In the second place it is not a question of politics because any final action can be a result only of convictions. Politics are of man, concerned with the devices of his making. Convictions are of God, for the vision of truth is the gift of His Spirit. I have reasoned out my points to the best of my ability. I have tried to understand and express what God seemed to be teaching me, but whatever my hopes may be, I hardly expect that I shall persuade anybody. I do not offer this last statement as a becoming tribute to a belated modesty, but because I have very little belief in human persuasion at all. We are looking, even in our quarrels we have been looking, for God's way, God's will, God's truth. For many of us new truths, new ideas, new habits have become very difficult. It will take us the long patience, not of years but perhaps of life-times, before we come to the vision of a fuller, more perfect, more many-sided Christianity, fixed in those firm roots which drink of the living waters, diverse in its branches, whose leaves will be for the healing of the nations.

I cannot bear to admit that word 'impossible' in any final sense, for that is to doubt God's power. Yet, to contemplate unity as something immediately attainable is very like an assertion of man's self-will. 'It is

not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power.' We have begun to see that there really are deep principles on both sides waiting to be reconciled. We have hardly begun to see what they are. Greatly daring, perhaps out of sheer vanity, I have tried to define and set them out. It may well be of this generation that it is written: 'Thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not enter therein, because ye rebelled against my word at the waters of Strife.' Or, as it is written upon another occasion, 'But your little ones, that ye said should be a prey, they shall go in and possess it.' And yet again, it may be for us that God has kept this great thing.

PART III.

DOCTRINE.

CHAPTER XII.

CREEDS AND FAITH.

So far I have dealt with the question in dispute as being primarily concerned, first with religious observance, and then with ecclesiastical system. I have assumed that the old-fashioned evangelical faith in the Incarnation and in the Atoning Death of Christ was a common ground between us. I have in general not done more than ask what place certain forms had, and how far they might be necessary for the consistent presentation and maintenance of that faith, although incidentally I have given some explanation of what we took to be its force and meaning.

I made the assumption because it would be confusing if I tried to argue two questions, the religious and the doctrinal, at the same time. I thought I was justified in making the assumption because that evangelical faith was not very long ago regarded as the centre and core of Non-Conformist teaching. Even now I believe it is passionately held by much the larger number, and that very few would definitely or formally repudiate it. I believe I could say that many, even of those who feel it to be slipping away from them, would gladly get back to it if they could.

I am well aware, however, that this assumption cannot permanently be maintained, and herein we may

see something of the depth and sublety of the questions which divide us, the difficulty and at the same time the importance of understanding their true nature. We have discussed the rival claims of our ministries and of our systems for a very long time. We have hardly recognised—I personally have only just come to recognise—that we on the Church side were contending for a ministry and system which was primarily and distinctively intended to present and maintain the essential ground-work of the Christian faith, while the Non-Conformists were contending for a ministry which should build up and express the Christian activity and development. Each of us was so wrapped up in his own point of view that he could only judge the other from it. The Churchman regarded the Non-Conformist ministry as a rival sacramental order. The Non-Conformist could not understand why the efficiency of his own ministry should not be recognised.

So far there did not seem to be finally conclusive reason why the two systems should not be united, and there was every reason why they should. The Church system grievously needs spontaneity, freedom, development ; the Non-Conformist system seems to us in imminent peril of drifting away from Christian faith to a belief in personal energy and feelings, activities and experiences. If, however, the time for so simple a solution is not passed, that solution is becoming more and more difficult as the two courses lead further to their logical conclusions. Formerly, Non-Conformists could not see that the fixed ground-work given in Christian doctrine or teaching needed a religious or sacramental presentation ; but by many of the younger generation the question is being asked whether there is a fixed ground-work which can be so presented. To

their minds the so-called ground-work is wholly a life. The controversy about forms perhaps was from the beginning, it is certainly now becoming a controversy as to the nature of faith. The question of sacraments is secondary to that of Creeds.

I think this view of things is correct, and yet it was hardly possible for us to do other than we have done. We may argue over Creeds and Articles a long time without ever getting within range of one another's meaning. Beginning from religious usages, which are after all the truest expression of religious ideas, the problem of the sacramental gift brought us to the point almost at once. Is the Divine Presence, is God, a Something we know only by personal experience, only recognise within the modes of our being, or is it a Something altogether greater than ourselves, which we acknowledge, not first in feeling, but first in worship ?

Certainly the strong objection which most Non-Conformists feel to the use of the Creeds are to us very puzzling. We are so accustomed to accept those Creeds as a short minimum statement of the essential points of Christian belief that we can hardly realise the position of men, apparently holding the same beliefs, who yet object to the statements, and still more when we find that on being pressed they are objecting to the existence of such statements. We cannot help feeling that there is some misunderstanding, either about the meaning of the Creeds, or about the use we want to make of them. With every motive for wishing to understand, I am still far from sure that I do understand rightly. After much perplexity I fancy I can see something of what is meant, and I will do my best, as before, if only for the sake of being corrected.

On a superficial view the objection to Creeds seems to us to proceed from two quite different motives, held by two very different sets of people. (*a*) Some, I think most, Non-Conformists hold the same belief as ourselves, as fully and as strongly as we do, but they dislike giving it a formal expression, partly because they quite rightly regard faith as a matter of life rather than of intellectual assent. In consequence, they are inclined to be critical over the exact expressions provided, critical over both their insufficiency upon the really vital or living issues and their over-sufficiency on the intellectual issues. (*b*) There are, however, others who seem to us to have definitely thrown off that ground-work of belief which the Creeds were meant to express.

If we could take these as two clearly distinct positions, and if we could mark off those who belonged to the one or to the other, things would be much simpler. For my own part I could say at once I did not propose to write a book on Christian Apologetics, I had only to consider the real place of a statement of beliefs. But the position is not simple. The puzzling part is that the positions which seem to us so different, do not seem very different to those concerned. When we looked at the Non-Conformist system from without, we found one body with an ' Episcopalian ' system, another with a rigidly ordained ministry, and we might imagine both were nearer to us than the Quakers, the Salvation Army, or some independent chapel which has no regular ministry and no sacraments. Yet we find in fact that all seem to share in a common spirit—a spirit of ' freedom,' by which in spite of what is more obvious they seem drawn rather to one another than to us. So, even those who avow our beliefs most strenuously

seem to feel themselves more in sympathy with those who disavow them than with us who formulate them. Again, we find those who definitely deny our beliefs are after all relatively few, but there is a very large and growing number, who altogether deny that the beliefs are fundamental, and who are attaching less and less importance to them. The spirit of freedom in the system is a spirit of freedom also in belief.

When we saw how deep-seated were our differences, it seemed to me almost foolish to imagine that we could patch up real union merely by placing separate organisations side by side. We ought rather to begin by asking what are the principles concerned, and in what relation do they stand to one another. It is the principles we have to recognise first. We are still more bound to that method now that we find the same difference recurring in regard to our faith. I propose first to examine what we mean by faith. In what sense can we call it a life? In what way, if any, is the intellect concerned? Next, we may ask what can be meant by essential beliefs, whether there are such things, and what part they play in our life. How far the Creeds meet any of our requirements we can leave to another chapter.

In the two questions I propose to consider here, I used two different words. I spoke first of a *faith*, then of a *belief*. The distinction between them is of great importance. We will take belief first because it is the simpler, and in examining its meaning I will try to keep to the simplest and most common-place usages. If we have a difficult term to deal with, it is always better to avoid as long as we can the complexities of its religious associations.

Belief is certainly a common enough word. We use 'I believe' as synonymous with 'I think,' or 'I have an opinion' in somewhat marked contrast to 'I saw' or 'I know.' In general the first set of terms expresses a doubt; the second set implies a certainty. This distinction, however, is secondary or accidental; the root difference lies in the process. Knowledge belongs to sight and the axiomatic—or what we take as such—and to what can be proved from these by a deductive or mathematical reasoning. Opinions or beliefs are always a matter of inductive reasoning from experience, and uncertain because the results of that process generally are somewhat uncertain. Thus the past is in principle a matter of knowledge, for we assume somebody must know and have seen what happened. In practice, they do not always tell us truthfully what they saw; therefore in practice we have to go largely on inference, and past history is often a doubtful opinion. The future is always an inference, and therefore always of opinion, except the future eclipses of astronomy which are known, because we now take the principles of astronomy as axioms and can calculate with deductive certainty.

It is curious and not unimportant to note therefore that belief is always associated in our mind with reason. If I say that 'I believe A. B. is going to commit burglary,' I shall be immediately asked why. I may find it difficult to explain why, but if I admitted I had no reasons I should be set down as a lunatic. Knowledge, on the other hand, does not necessarily require reasons, and indeed always rests finally on something which cannot be reasoned. If I say I know two and two are four, no one calls me a lunatic because I can only repeat that I do know it.

The greatest distinction between the two is in the object of the verbs. The object of the belief is always a statement or proposition. I believe that 'the train will go to London.' The object of knowledge may be a statement, for I might say I knew it would. More distinctively the object is a thing or a person. I know a tree or I know Tom. I can only say I believe Tom, when I mean I believe that he is telling the truth. Belief, therefore, is entirely intellectual. The proposition or statement is intellectual; my belief is its acceptance by my intellect, for reasons which my intellect finds sufficient. This holds of religions as well of trains. I believe there is a God, or that the train will start, partly because I have been told so by credible persons, whether Popes, or Apostles, or my friends, or Bradshaw, and partly for a multitude of other reasons which I can or cannot work out. It is a very difficult business to know what has brought one's mind to a belief.

When we come to faith, or trust, or belief in, taking these as synonymous, we have a much more complex idea. In the first place, the object of our faith is always a real thing or person, or what can be conceived as such. It is never a statement. I believe that the train will start, but I can only say that I believe *in* the train. In the second place, in order to be an object of faith, this thing (*i.e.* the train, in which I include all, the driver, the rails and so on, as one complex object) must be capable of producing results which I proceed to attain by its means.

There are here three points to note. (1) Faith goes beyond belief, beyond mere intellectual assent, because it is looking to practical results. I have faith in the train, because I am letting it carry me to my destination.

When I arrive there, I still believe that the train will go on to the terminus and will also return, but it would be straining language to say I had any further faith in it. Since I have no intention of going on, nor of returning by it, I do not *use* the train.

(2) Faith therefore implies an activity on the part of its object. It generally also involves a good deal of activity on my part, for to fulfil my faith I must go to catch the train. It may lead up to activity, for I travel by the train in order to do several useful things. But faith itself is not so much an activity as a passivity. It actually consists in an attitude of will by which I throw myself upon something not myself that it may do something for me. The central act of my faith lies in my sitting still and allowing myself to be carried instead of walking.

(3) Although belief is not the whole of faith, it is an essential element in it. It is the essential element, basis or ground-work which makes faith possible. The faith by which I allow the train to carry me somewhere rests upon my belief that the train goes there. If I do not take the trouble to see that my belief is reasonable, I may find myself at the wrong place. Faith is by no means always a virtue.

If now we have got a clear meaning for our word, let us ask what place faith has in our life. We have a vague, and yet a strong, feeling that even if it is not always a virtue, it is yet a very glorious thing. We will begin with faith in our fellowmen. Certainly without faith we could not be men at all, or even animals. We could only be vegetables, and sterile vegetables, for propagation involves an act of faith. We are accustomed to say that civilisation makes us sceptical, and this is very true, for civilisation is a development of the

self-conscious personal life which, breaking through the chain of mere routine habit, looks at everything with the conscious judging intelligence, acts accordingly with the free and conscious choice that make foresight. This bringing of everything to judgment is what we mean by scepticism.

But it is no less true that civilisation is essentially a life of faith. The nearer one goes to savagery the more self-dependent each man is. The huntsman makes his own weapons, catches his own game, dresses his own skins, puts up his own shelter. He must trust his fellow-tribesman, or he would not be human, but there is not much except the sacredness of the family to witness to the need of help. Commerce and industrialism seem to us full of suspicion and strife. They are really a vast structure built upon, and made possible by, faith and mutual help. A bank is a temple of faith, for the banker never dreams of seeing nor wishes to touch with his fingers a hundredth part of the wealth he enters with his pen. He trusts you and you trust him ; he credits you and you credit him. Taken as individuals, we are all very helpless, but because we trust one another and help one another we can do almost anything. Faith is the result of our weakness, and it is the glory of our weakness because it is its redemption.

I seem to have been singing the glories of modern civilisation, and I do not think we ought to forget its wonder and spirituality, even though we are mainly conscious of other sides which are horrible and evil. How can the same fountain bring forth sweet water and bitter, as it palpably seems to do ? The power and glory of civilisation come from the accord between opposites ; the evil and misery come from their disaccord. We began by being sceptical, and bringing all

things to judgment. When we judged ourselves, we judged our insufficiency. Thus, when we had learnt our own weakness, in our need of help we found power. Out of doubt and questioning we found the answer in faith.

But in this process there are two fatal flaws. (1) Our faith is the great underlying fact of life, its perpetual assumption, and because we take our assumptions for granted we do not think much about them. Our scepticisms, our judgings, our doubts, on the other hand, are very hard work and take up all our attention. Our life is built out of weakness and helpfulness, but our consciousness is occupied by the sense of power and the desire for success. We live by faith, for we are parts of a community, yet we think of ourselves as individuals, and even the good we would do for another must be a choice of the self.

Of course, reflexion shows us this is all wrong, but it shows us also that it is a wrong we cannot escape. We belong to the great common humanity, but what is the value of the ignorance of our judgment as to its good? When we were young, we had a serene confidence in our fitness to put things straight and to say how they ought to go. Our earnestness found it fine fun to have a try at putting them straight and filled us with an intense ambition to be grown up, so that we might try on an adequate scale. As we get older, if we do not learn faith in God, at least we learn unbelief in ourselves.

The world of youth is a very simple place with a clear-cut right and wrong no one can ever mistake. The world of middle age is a horribly complex affair in which with the best intentions it is much easier to do mischief than to do any real good. Ideals remain as a dream, but what can a man effect? Of what avail are his

judgments and efforts? This much, that if we stick pretty close to our own business, it will be reasonably possible to keep ourselves afloat. Is not this what the actual order of things has designed for us? What do we know about the good of humanity? Is humanity anything more than a large number of individuals similarly engaged in looking after their own selves? Somehow the actual order works out fairly well, for incidentally also we help one another. Why should we not let it go its own way, putting in such little helpfulnesses as come within our reach though with no great idea of their serviceableness?

Is not this the epitome of human life? The faith by which we work we can only take for granted, for we cannot make it continuously possible. As mere fragments of a whole we can only have a fragmentary conception of the whole. Real as our faith may be in it—the most real thing about us—we cannot realise it in a fragmentary consciousness already occupied by the activities and beliefs of the self. Humanity, therefore, has the unreality of an abstract notion, and collective humanity is the sum of all weakness. The Superman of Nietzsche was the ideal of power, and every attempt to realise the type has shown its vileness and its folly.

The true and permanent redemption of human weakness can lie only in faith in God, since the principles which to us are separate and inconsistent are in Him reconciled. All human knowledge is derivative, for it is the knowledge of the observer. As things are, so by experience and reflection we may learn to think of them. Knowledge in God is causative, like the knowledge of a designer. So things are as He thinks them. We therefore and the things we know stand apart, and the gap is only bridged by a partial knowledge;

the knowledge of God is complete, holding in Himself, reconciling and perfecting, the imperfect and partial.

Without this faith in God, faith in man is impossible, and faith in ourselves is a mere vain boasting, available at best for purposes of self-seeking. With faith in God all things are possible. We can believe in men, for if humanity means little for us but an abstraction, assuredly it means a great deal for God. We may know little of what God wants for man, but we can have patience and learn, and learning, since it is essentially of humility, is essentially of faith. Nor need we be afraid to act, even if it involves big issues. We have only our judgments and our own theories to go upon, and these may be wrong. God Who has made us thus, knows our weakness and our self-will. But if we have done our best to learn, and to keep to what we have been given to see, what then? Our confidence and our rejoicing are not in ourselves, but in God. Every human instinct shrinks from failure, and to have made a fool of yourself is the greatest terror in life. Yet if we fear failure, we shall do nothing. With the love of God, though the shrinking and pain are still there, there is something very beautiful in failure, something one would not have missed for the world in learning one's own weakness. With faith in God, one knows well enough that failure is no great matter.

I do not know if I have done it very well, or made my meaning intelligible, but I thought it worth while to try to show that for all human life there is one true basis. Life can grow rightly and consistently so long as a man is prepared to start everything by saying 'I believe in God.' Was this worth explaining? 'Surely in writing for professedly religious people, we might

take that for granted.' Alas, this is just where our religion has followed the way of our civilisation. Preoccupied with our activities we have forgotten all about our faith. We talk fine things about God, as we do about our fellow-men and about what we should like to do for them. We hardly consider what they do for us, and it is amazing how little comes of our talk and our ideals.

In the religious world to-day we are all full of devout feelings, experiences, enthusiasms, noble aspirations, constructive ideals, moral energies, character-buildings. Of course there is another side, but we do not want to be too critical about it. 'God is doing His best.' We admit that it is a very poor best, but 'God has never had a fair chance with the world.' Evidently now we are getting to work in earnest, things will look up a bit. If this is not believing in God, anyhow God will have good reason to believe in us, so there will be faith somewhere.

As it is with the means of our religion so it is with the end or aim for its attainment. 'The concern of religion is to regard the world as a means by which the highest value of the devout man is realised.' 'The kingdom of God is that in which alone man finds his blessedness.' Or, that we may not miss the point of what might be ambiguous, 'Man has the sense of his own dignity, and makes himself the centre round which the world closes as a circle.'

I have taken these illustrative passages somewhat hurriedly from different sources. Some are from writers of the highest religious influence; some are sayings picked up from platform addresses. Their authorship is of no moment. Let the reader open any of the vast multitude of modern books on the subject, and he will

find plenty more quotations. Religion is a feeling of our own, or, when we get a little sceptical of feelings, then it is the activity of our practical devotion to moral and social problems. The end of religion is the development of the aforesaid feelings, or it is character-building, or again, it is the seeking of solutions to the moral and social problems.

I do not hesitate to repeat that it is this very thing which makes our religion and our activities alike ineffective. 'We make ourselves the centre of a world.' Yes, that is just what we do, and it is of course an utterly unreal world, a patent fancy world of our own imagining. It so happens that the real world was made a longish time ago. Some of us believe that it was made by God, and that God, and not man, is its centre.

If the modern world could accept that belief, we should find a basis for reverence, and reverence is the basis for patience, humility, careful study. But why should we study, learn, enquire, about God's world and God's way when we can make, not one but so many, much better worlds and ways, each for ourselves according to our own theories of what a world ought to be? Meanwhile the practical business man says with equal justice that he has to deal with the world as it is, and has neither interest nor use for fancy worlds. Both of us then have lost the reverent fear of God's judgment upon what the practical man does or we religious folk think.

'We take the thought of God for granted,' and we do not at all realise that it is the most difficult of all thoughts. Even now when the doubt is meeting us on every side, being hurled at us by the van-load from all the publishers, we hardly realise the difficulty of the

thought, or the difficulty of making it real, just because it is so easy to make it a sentiment, and we think so little of the real world. In all the back ages of history men have sought for God as a refuge from the world, because He was its maker and its ruler, and they could not find Him. We stand where they stand, and their means are ours. The heavens are telling the glory of God. We turn to them, and we learn—Astronomy. Let us go to the children, peer into the child-mind, and we return with our hands full of the observations of Experimental Psychology.

In this perplexity the scientist comes upon us. 'What do you expect to find? Please remember that in this area of the fact, of the true order of the world, there is no room for dreams, fancies, preferences. If you search with honest patience, you can learn somewhat of just how things are and of the order in which they stand. Whether they are nice—according to your standard of what is nice—does not in the least affect the matter or alter the truth.' Science closes the reign of heathen religion, that is, of the religion of human notion and aspiration. The best philosophy could do was to assert an Ultimate as unknown as Kant's 'thing-in-itself.'

Only one real attempt at an answer has been made. Mohammedanism at least laid hold on the primary truth that reality is not what we reach, but what reaches to us. It presented God not as the abstraction drawn from our experience, but as One Who had at least spoken by 'the Prophet,' who had sent a message. Apart however from what was thus given, Mohammedanism leaves the whole order in which we have to live just what it was before. We are told God rules over it, but as He stands clear away from it, the mere

fact of rule rather adds to its unintelligibility than otherwise.

Only one real answer has been given. Christianity begins from the same point—God reached to us, but not merely by a message. God Himself took our nature, accepted our limitations, lived our life, died as we must die. Let us take three of the main difficulties of life, and see whether and in what way this answer meets them.

(1) Will it enable us to answer the scientist? Can we by its means find our way through life any better? Will it help us to know what we ought to do? Plainly no. We can no more solve the problems of economics or sociology by New Testament quotations than we can solve the problems of geology from Gen. i. I maintain that the scientist is broadly right, and we can only learn God's will bit by bit in a proper scientific way. We do not expect to know the Prime Minister's policy because we are old friends. Indeed a man deserves to lose a friendship which he uses as a claim for official confidence. In the miracle of love God gave to us, not the knowledge of what He is doing or going to do, but the Presence, the vision, the knowledge of Himself.

(2) What is implied in this will be better understood when we consider the problem of evil, which some think the gravest of all our problems. 'God is doing His best'—and a shocking poor best it is. Is this irreverent? So far as the first statement goes, I am not so much struck by its irreverence as by the extraordinary conception it betrays of the meaning of the Name of God. The second statement, however, is a perfectly honest statement of how things seem to us. God has accepted it and answered us. The evil we all

feel is just the evil of our weakness, the defect of our limitation. We have so much, we can do so much, but there is so much more that we have not got and cannot do. Thus the evil is intensified into wretchedness ; through our resentment sorrow becomes misery and desire becomes greed, for greed is nothing more than the impatience of our weakness. Here is for life a whole nest of contradictions. God meant us to be weak, for the evil of weakness is not an evil at all, but a beautiful thing, being the whole basis of love. We cannot help thinking it intolerable and trying to overcome it, for imperfection is the soil also of sin. True, it will serve for either, but it is not intolerable since God Himself was made man that He might bear it, and that He might bear the sin also.

(3) To my mind, the problem of evil, though more pressing is less central than the problem of humanity. Man as an individual is but a part, a fragment, of a whole. His good, his being, his powers, come from the whole and are designed for it. Man, unlike the animals, acts for a conscious end. But of this end for which he should act he knows nothing. His conception of the whole humanity is merely an abstraction from the individuals he knows or has heard of. That is not the worst. The despair of it all is that to all seeming there neither is nor can be a real whole, a real humanity, to live for or to know.

Water is water and rock is rock and force is force—equivalently interchangeable—to the end of all time. But just as we learn more, grow older, wiser, just as we grow more fully to be men, so we grow more individual. For this growth is a development of a consciousness which is a self-consciousness. As we learn to think, our ideas are different, ' independent ' even when similar ;

as we grow in feeling so we separate, since our feeling is more essentially our own than our thoughts. Even if we seek the common good, we have first of all separated ourselves to make ourselves the judges and agents of what mankind ought to like and have.

Our life then steadily leads us away from what is common to what is personal, because our attention is necessarily concentrated upon what we are doing, and that starts us from the wrong point. To man the one thing necessary—in the full sense of necessary—is not action but passion, not doing but suffering. What we do is accidental, in that we need not have done it. It was our act because it was voluntary. What happens to a man is that which must be, by this he 'is made.' To man doing is a joy, fulfilment of power, life, what all choose and seek. Strictly speaking, the word 'suffering' means only 'that which happens to you,' but in common use we always take suffering to mean pain, because what happens is that which is not chosen. We all aspire to do great things, but we shall hardly do as many miracles as Christ did. We long for eloquence, but no man spake as this Man. Yet neither by act nor speech did Christ redeem the world, but in silence and helplessness because He suffered. It was suffering which needed to be redeemed, for suffering is the one common human stuff. Activity is so far necessary to us, since he who will not work cannot suffer. If you will not try to do big things, glorious things, you will have no disappointment, no failure, no shame, no Cross, and therefore no Resurrection. And Christ alone could redeem suffering, for Christ alone could make the renunciation of will in suffering—which by itself is merely a negative acquiescence—into union with God.

There is then a real Humanity for which men were made, in which they become men, and that Humanity is Christ, Who has re-created it in reconciliation to God by His sacrifice. 'Apart from Christ, there is no Humanity, so there are no men, nothing but broken wreckage of what might and should have been men, battered upon the rocks of their own logic, tossed up on the shifting sands of their disconnected notions, feelings, desires, pathetically struggling to weave out of these same notions and desires a continuity of some kind which would hold together what might be saved.'

The Atonement is so much the centre of all life that anyone who tries to explain it must of necessity involve himself in any number of important and difficult controversies. On the other hand, once we have realised its gospel, we have no alternative but either to believe in it, or to believe in ourselves. Here also I have probably explained myself very badly, but I do not think this is a disadvantage. I wanted to show the force and nature of the gospel of the Atonement. I have put down what occurred to me as the essential points, somewhat hurriedly, perhaps confusedly, quite inadequately. Many of those who may read these lines could have done it much better for themselves, and I had far rather they did. The one central point will stand out all the more clearly, just because no one will be tempted to criticise the statement as if it were a finished attempt to solve difficulties or to answer objections. I am not trying to maintain or justify a position, but only to show in what it consists. I doubt if I can justify it satisfactorily; I do know it justifies itself.

To a vast mass of our modern thinking, or instinct, or writing, the doctrine of Christ's Person, of His Divinity

—or Deity—is ' theology,' is ' a dogma,' is plainly something added on to the simplicity of the gospel. Even those who personally accept traditional doctrine regard it as secondary and unimportant, for ' personal life cannot be appropriated by judgments about the Person.' ' The Gospel is love, and not opinions.' Love ! Did anybody ever doubt that love was a beautiful ideal ? The setting forth of an ideal is not a gospel but a law. What men have doubted was whether it was attainable. If they ever disputed the ideal it was because they despaired of its attainment. A gospel is not an ideal, but a news of something which has made an ideal possible.

This modern thinking, which makes the dogma of fact ' secondary ' to personal appropriation or experience, suggests a very curious theory of knowledge. The use of a fact may be more *vital* than the merely speculative knowledge of its existence, nevertheless the use is secondary since it springs from the knowledge. I eat my dinner, because I know that it is ready and that it is edible. Is the order different in religious matters ? He that would come to God (in faith), must first believe *that*—He is, and *that*—He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

We need not here discuss the ultimate refinements of epistemological theories. In religion we are concerned with the simple and practical point of view, the broad principles which appeal to simple and practical people. On this side what we have said is so obvious that the cause of confusion must lie deeper. The modern religious mind regards ' appropriation ' as primary and vital, the doctrinal fact as secondary and unimportant, just because it has accustomed itself to think of its own states as primary and it has pretty well forgotten how

to think of God. We are so fascinated by the joy of appropriation that we do not care to ask what there is to be appropriated. Such an attitude is an inversion of Christianity and of all Scripture together.

Christianity, the preaching of the gospel of the Incarnation and the Atonement, is concerned wholly with God. It was God Who dwelt among us, Whom we saw and came to know; it was God Who shared our weakness, chose the evil we shrink from, bore the sin we loathe; it was God Who constituted a Humanity, as only God could do, bringing us out of ourselves into union with Himself. How then can the doctrine of the Divinity—or Deity—of Christ be a secondary or unimportant question of opinions? That it was God Who has done these things for us is the primary and essential core and substance of the gospel, apart from which there is no gospel for us anywhere at all in heaven or earth.

The teaching of the prophets, the teaching of our Lord as given in the Gospels, the teaching of S. Paul and S. John, S. Peter and S. James, and S. Jude—all alike are concerned primarily with God. The moral teaching and ideals, whether they speak of the righteousness of conduct or the love and joy and communion that are of feeling and experience, are all secondary. They are the results which follow, which by this relation to God have been made possible. S. Paul says that man in heathenism, in the religion without Christ, had been immoral, but he was immoral just because he was godless, because he did not like to retain God in his knowledge.

If I call our modern religion heathen, it will be resented. Only vulgar and violent controversialists like using terms because they are resented, yet that is the

very reason why I feel bound to bring this charge, though I do *not* like doing it. I am trying to be as little violent and vulgar as my character permits, but this resentment blinds us to our real danger and to the real meaning of heathenism. In order to be a heathen it is not necessary to worship a mumbo-jumbo with mother-of-pearl eyes, or to offer flowers to Kali. It is only necessary to take our own judgments and our own actions as the centre of our own world, to worship and offer our flowers—flowers of rhetoric will do quite well—before the beauty of our own conceptions and experiences.

And this is the most natural thing in the world. Our attention is of necessity so absorbed over the ideas we are trying to form and the personal activities which are their proper outgrowth that far the larger part of our conscious life is passed in a heathen—or to use another word, a 'Pelagian'—atmosphere. If we realised that, though natural and inevitable, this was nevertheless the illusion of self-consciousness, and that it was God's purposes and God's activity working through us, sometimes in spite of us, which constituted the real meaning of events, determined their true results, the illusion would not greatly matter. When, however, we are so conscious of what is our own, and know so little of what is His, it is ever so easy to assume that God is what we think and His will what we choose. And that matters a great deal. Instead of that consciousness of our foolishness and ignorance which is the ground of faith, we are committed to a self-satisfaction and self-will which are the substance of unbelief.

A very popular and influential religious leader of the day has expressed with singular felicity the ideas running in so many minds by distinguishing 'the Deity,'

which it was of course impossible to ascribe to Christ, with ' the Divinity ' which, though His in a very special way, He yet shares with other good men. The distinction was very familiar to classical Greek paganism, and it is worth while to note the idea underlying its different forms. Fate was the ultimate impersonal power of events. There were also divinities, greater or less—gods, strong but far from omnipotent, as well as local powers of the forest or stream. When in Hellenic days men tried to think more seriously, Fate became ' Deity,' the Absolute One of all ideas, the Unknowable, the Unattainable, the sum of all negations. It was Nothing, for if it was Reality it was hardly real. Again it was Everything, all things taken together, the Cosmos. ' The Divine ' had stood for whatever could help men or of which men were afraid. It now meant little more than a quality—power, or goodness if goodness were a power. There were poets and clever men and heroes who could do what plain men could not, and they were divine. Then Caligula and Domitian, emperors bad as well as good, were also divine ; certainly they were a big part of the government of the world.

The results I have summarised elsewhere,—Deity becomes a name for the bigness of all things taken together, and Divinity is a name for the niceness of some things taken selectively. But since everything really depends on the energy of our activity and the nature of our judgment as to what we count ' nice '—upon which there is very little check, for what one man counts nice does not appeal to another—it makes little difference whether we call it God or not. The idea of God is a result of certain forms of our activity ; it does not stand for a cause. In this way the old thinkers

levered faith in God clean out of the world. They believed they had levered God out too, but the apostle—and the historians—suggest that this conclusion was premature.

The teaching of Christianity, the ground of that teaching and the result of that teaching, can hardly be disputed. Christianity never suggested that it had found a new way by which men could come to God. It proclaimed that God had Himself come to men. Now that the separation between God and man had been broken through it was able to do away with the remoteness of God, the horrible impersonality and abstractness of the conception of mere 'Deity.' If, however, God was to be a reality in man's life, it was no less necessary to do away with the confusion of 'Divinities.' God was revealed as a Self, God only in Himself was to be worshipped, and all else was the work of His hands. The times of this ignorance God had winked at, but now He called men everywhere to repent.

On this subject I may be narrow-minded, though I have no desire to be (if I had I should know better than to confess it), but I would summarise my view in three statements. (1) I cannot imagine anyone of sincere Christian feeling to whom the practical godlessness of the self-consideration I have described is not abhorrent, and I have tried to suggest why it ought to be. (2) I can hardly imagine anyone who is aware of the habitual working of his own mind who is not conscious how easily he falls into that state. I have tried to show that it is quite the natural state for us to be in. (3) I can hardly imagine anyone at all conversant with what is going on in the religious world to-day who would not recognise how strong was the tendency to accept

and justify this state as normal and proper, as the line on which 'a constructive theology' should be built. 'I should have been well content with a Christianity without God.' It remains for me to show how I believe this state has come about.

I am afraid I must say that I believe it to be the direct, though unintentional, result of certain features in the old-fashioned Protestant Evangelicalism. I am afraid to say it, because I am afraid it will give offence, and also I am afraid it will be misunderstood. I must, therefore, not only give my reasons; I must safeguard my meaning. In the first place, let me repeat that I am not here speaking as an outsider. At one time of my life I was a devoted and whole-hearted Protestant Evangelical, with no eyes for anything beyond its views. I believe I have learnt to see a great many things which once I did not see; wherefore, though I have not ceased to be a Protestant, I should no longer describe myself as simply a Protestant. On the other hand, except rather doubtfully for a year or two, I have never ceased to be a whole-hearted Evangelical.

Next, I do not in the least suggest that the old-fashioned Evangelicals were either weak or confused in their belief in God. They did believe in God, and their whole lives were moulded by that belief, yet their dominant consciousness was rather of what some by way of distinction have called 'Jesus-worship.' Certainly all their convictions were based on the belief that Jesus was God, that union with Him, love for Him, was love for God, yet the two thoughts had a tendency to drift apart. A doctrine of the Atonement, widely held in evangelical circles, was hardly other than Ditheistic. The Father and the Son represented different qualities; they were not merely distinguishable in

operation, they performed different actions. The Evangelicals were not inclined to intellectual reflection ; they rather dreaded it as leading away from depth of feeling. Through this weakness they lost control of feeling, the power of watching and criticising its direction. Feeling is primarily one's own, at most it is personal. Those who gave themselves up to it lost the breadth of their interest in the manifold working of God's doings, especially in directions many of them were apt to call ' worldly.'

There are many modern Evangelicals who stand just where their fathers stood, for, though there are defects in the position, where the position is not developed, the defects are not realised. But there are multitudes more in the younger generation with whom it is very different. In them the intellect begins to assert itself and it finds no satisfaction. Interests widen, and therewith come new problems to which there seems to be no answer. The old love for Christ remains, but, since all emphasis was laid on feeling, it is now a feeling only, comparable to aesthetic or musical feeling, and feeling is sufficiently met by the enthusiasm of admiration for a personality, an inspiring example, a moral teaching. ' I could have been well content with a Christianity without God.'

CHAPTER XIII.

CREEDS AND AUTHORITY.

In the last chapter I did not mean to suggest that any considerable number of Non-Conformists failed to realise the necessity of faith in God; I do think, however, that very many fail to realise the difficulty of that faith, the ease with which it is lost unconsciously, and in consequence the need of keeping it before men's minds. To be more precise, I think the very intensity of their devotion to the Person of Jesus Christ has thrown the meaning of that devotion somewhat out of focus, and thereby obscured its most essential value for life purposes.

Certainly it was for just such practical purposes that the Creeds were drawn up and that we value them. I propose to examine their suitability and possible effectiveness from this side. I ought also to consider the objections and misunderstandings, the disadvantages and abuses to which they are liable. I can only deal with their general structure and idea, for obviously if I were to attempt to treat the particular phrases one by one I ought to be starting not a new chapter but a new book.

So far as I can follow, there are three main objections brought against the Creeds:

(1) They are too exclusively intellectual, demanding

the assent of our minds to formal statements rather than the devotion of our lives to religious principles.

(2) The statements thus put forward are obscure and difficult, the expression of a metaphysical reflection which invites, and is not above, criticism.

(3) There is further a very strong resentment against the use of ecclesiastical authority to impose conditions of communion which are in effect a fetter on freedom of thought.

These three objections will serve to divide what I want to say on the idea of the Creeds, on their language, on their origin and use.

(1) We will begin then by asking whether or how far the Creeds can be described as intellectual statements inviting assent. I am afraid I must admit that some unhappy confusion in the common ecclesiastical terminology lends a certain justification to this view, nevertheless it is nothing more than a confusion. The English Church speaks of three Creeds, "that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed," "the Nicene Creed," and "that which is commonly called the Creed of S. Athanasius." It is, of course, well known that all these titles are wrong. The Apostles' Creed is the Baptismal Creed of the west, which grew more or less to its present shape in the course of the second and third centuries. The 'Nicene' Creed was the creed perhaps of Jerusalem with the addition of some phrases from the true Creed of Nicea. The Athanasian Creed was drawn up in the fifth century.

The point of immediate significance is that the Athanasian Creed is not really a Creed at all, but a statement, similar to our Thirty-nine Articles, the Scotch Catechisms, the Free Church Catechism, and many other documents which at and since the Reformation

have been put out by almost every theological body in turn. The Athanasian 'Creed' begins: 'Whosoever wills to be saved it is necessary. . . .' The Thirty-nine Articles begin: 'There is but one living and true God.' The Scotch Catechism begins: 'The chief end of man is to. . . .' The Free Church Catechism (1898) begins: 'The Christian religion is the religion founded by our Lord.' As they begin, so they continue with statements which ask our assent. The Creeds proper do not begin with a statement, or at least not with a statement of fact or theory, but with a personal statement. The Apostles' and the Nicene Creed begin in nearly identical words: 'I believe in (one) God.' The Greek forms begin: '*We* believe in. . . .' Creeds are then the assertion of a personal and living relation or attitude. The difference is that which I tried to explain in the last chapter between faith and belief. Belief, I admit, is purely intellectual; faith, or belief in, is much more. As the form is different, so the use is different. Our Articles, for instance, are merely appended to the Prayer Book as a standard which our official teachers are required to accept, somewhat like the statements of a trust deed. Catechisms are used for the instruction of the young. The Athanasian Creed is sung as an occasional psalm or hymn with a *gloria* at the end. The Creeds are a normal part of our worship; they are professed at Baptism, and constantly used in private prayer for a confession of that faith from which worship and Christian life proceed. Their recitation is part of an attempt to keep this ever before men's minds—'I believe in God.'

I am not in the least depreciating the value of Articles or statements. I have a very high regard for the Thirty-nine Articles, and still more for the Athanasian

Creed. If we are to have faith we must from time to time take stock also of our belief, but I have undertaken to speak of Creeds and I have not undertaken to speak of formulae in general. I shall confine myself to the two very ancient Creeds before us, first because Creeds and statements require to be considered in different ways. Secondly, I am glad to confine myself thus, because the Athanasian 'Creed' is the object of a controversy so bitter that it is difficult to say anything without the risk of misunderstanding and possible recrimination. I am very sorry it should be so, for if we could consider it coolly I doubt if there is any document which could give us so much help in unravelling our perplexities.

The Creeds then begin from this point: 'I believe in God.' If they went no further, I suppose no objection would have been made to them. Do we not all realise the importance of keeping that before our consciousness? But the Creeds do go a great deal further in three successive waves of expansion.

First, we have the core of the Creed itself in a threefold sentence. 'I believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit.'

Secondly, to each of these Names certain explanatory words are added to show the meaning they have for us.

I believe in God the Father, (as being) the Almighty, the Maker of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ (as) His Only Begotten Son, our Lord; and in the Holy Spirit, (from Whom is) the Holy Catholic Church, (through Whom is) the Communion of Saints and the Forgiveness of Sins, (by Whom is) Eternal life.

Thirdly, we have a statement of the historic means by which we have been brought to this faith. We believe in Jesus Christ—Who for us men and for our salvation

came down from heaven, and was Incarnate, suffered, died, rose again from the dead, ascended into Heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come again to judge.

I am not just now defending these expansions, still less the particular phrases employed, some of which we will consider presently. I am only pointing out their object. Of old, men seem to have said: 'As Christians the name of God means something to us; let us declare what that is, and how we come by it.'

If we ask why the Christian should have gone further than that simple phrase 'I believe in God?' the answer is in Church history, but it is a very long answer, and it is read in very different ways. It seems to me, however, that it is quite the wrong question to ask. In one sense, and in a very true sense, the Christian never did go further, never wanted to go further. The really pressing question is—How did the Christians get so far? how did they escape from those old heathen confusions about deities and divinities? How did they come to find in God, not the expression of natural inference, but a reality so intense that it would bear the weight of human faith and human life, so assured that a man could give up to it that most precious of all things, his own self? How did the Christians reach a belief *about* God such that they could believe *in* Him? The Christians had no wish to go beyond this, but they were very anxious not to stop short of it. They were very anxious also to mark off the road to its attainment, such that the wayfaring men, though fools, should not err therein. I trust we all admit that so far these were very excellent objects.

However, possibly the Church form is unnecessarily lengthy and I fully admit that anything unnecessary

is fatal, for it diverts attention from the issues which it ought to make plain. Let us try whether we cannot find a short cut to what we want. I have already given reasons why I do not think ' I believe in God ' would be sufficient. It represents admirably the final object, and our Creeds put it in the forefront of their statement, but by itself it is a most difficult conception.

There are, however, two others with which I happen to be familiar. A certain well-known Unitarian writer, still very popular, remarks that he is content with a Creed much shorter and simpler—' My Creed is " the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of men." ' A Creed is a common form for the use of common and simple people. I will consider this from the purely practical side.

In the first place, I find it a little hard to follow. As it stands it is not quite grammar, and I am not sure how I am meant to take it. Since it is called a Creed, and since we are looking for something to believe in, am I meant to understand the words ' I believe in,' as prefixed ? If this is its obvious intention, even then I must say the sentence does not appeal to me. My father and my brother have a very real meaning, and I can believe in them. Fatherhood and brotherhood are too abstract, too metaphysical, too un-solid for me. I have an uncomfortable feeling that abstract terms stand for notions, and that professing belief in my own notions is a very popular but not very healthy way of believing in myself. When I get into a difficulty in climbing, I like to be sure I have a leader who knows what he is doing and a good rope—Alpine Club pattern preferred. These I can trust. Leadership and the use of ropes we can talk about on the way home.

I do not want to cavil at expressions, and perhaps

' I believe in God the Father ' was what the writer really meant. I am quite willing to take it so, but then what shall we make of the second clause ? Should that run ' I believe in men as my brothers ? ' ' I believe in men ' hardly seems in place in a religious creed. Another religious writer once said—' Put not your trust in princes nor in any child of man for there is no help in them ' ; and yet another—' Cursed be the man that trusteth in men.'

Perhaps after all the original phrase was right, and it was not men, but the latent brotherhood in them in which we should trust. If it means the brotherhood they have in themselves, I am afraid I cannot believe in it, and in face of all our nationalisms and imperialisms, political and religious oppositions, trade competitions and combines, I do not see how anyone else can. Truly advertisements of all sorts, commercial, political and religious, are urging me to faith, but as each also warns me against faith in anything except its own goods, the demand is not convincing. If, on the other hand, our phrase really means us to profess our belief in that brotherhood of man which God Himself made by taking our nature, redeeming it from sin, placing it on the right hand of God, I gladly consent. The redeemed brotherhood of man in Christ is a reality well worth believing in, and brings the second clause into unity with the first clause. But if this is what the phrase means then it ought to be expressed, and I do not know any better way of expressing it than the Church Creed. Certainly it is what the Church Creed meant to express.

The second form referred to was put before me by a young friend who thought ' I believe in Jesus Christ ' was sufficient. In very early days apparently it was,

but I do not think it is now. Did my friend not believe in God, or did he think that too unimportant or too obvious to need mentioning? I have tried to point out how this looking at Christ apart from God has robbed belief in Christ of all its force. Numbers still use the phrase as meaning, not that Jesus Christ is their help, but that thinking about His life is helpful. Some mean only that thinking about a beautiful but imaginary life as drawn by an early unknown writer is helpful. Further, except in regard to the first person singular, this form has no reference to man, a subject on which the Unitarian form, not unreasonably, lays so much stress.

From the beginning the separation between God and man has been the difficulty of human life. No adequate bridge could be thrown across the gulf which divides a fragmentary and limited life from its infinite and perfect whole, the actual from the ideal, the practice of life from its end. We believe in Jesus Christ because we believe that in Him and by Him these things have been brought together. Surely all experience shows that this faith needs stating. The statement itself is not faith, but it does help us to keep it before our minds, and for this purpose what the faith really is, that the statement must express. Of the two forms I have examined, one states the two factors of difficulty without a hint of how they are to be reconciled; the other gives the factor of reconciliation without even an allusion to what it is reconciling. Even if we add the two forms together there would be nothing to show whether we meant these terms—God, Jesus Christ and Man—for three separate objects of belief or to show whether we meant them as one, to show how they were brought together or what they had to do with one another.

Forms are not simple because they are short but because they are clear ; we do not get rid of difficulties by hiding their omission under sonorous ambiguity. We have learnt a good deal from experience, and we have learnt this, that ' God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.' The worst of these short statements is that they are so intolerably complex—involved in such a maze of implications, suppressed intentions, unresolved ambiguities, meanings taken for granted but not expressed, understandings which are not understood.

(2) So far, however, as I can understand, the real objection against the Creeds does not lie in regard to the facts asserted, but in regard to what some have called ' the dogmatic superstructure of *interpretations*—cosmological and metaphysical,—by which the facts are encumbered.'

This is to us somewhat perplexing. Few things in Church history are more remarkable than (1) the intense, to my mind almost exaggerated, dislike and resentment shown by early Church writers at the intrusion of ' philosophy and dialectics ' into Christian belief ; (2) the absolute conviction of all that what they were laying down were the simple fundamental facts. Equally certainly, it is in this sense that we have taken the Creeds and that we should wish them to be taken now.

It would seem that there must be some misunderstanding about the use of the word *fact*, which certainly is an ambiguous word enough. I should like then to ask what cosmology and metaphysics stand for, what they have or have had to do with religion and theology. After all a dogma only means an assertion of something held to be necessary. We will ask whether the dogmas

implied in the Creed can be rightly called facts or interpretations.

Man's earliest problem is the problem of the world or cosmos. He claims to be above the world, yet the world is so much greater than himself, for his life is made out of it and lived in it. The world seems to be intelligible, but how can a fragment understand the whole of which it is but a part. Would not this be for the part to 'comprehend' the whole? We should understand the world,—or if we could not do that, at least we should understand our faith that it had an intelligible purpose, if we knew Him Who ruled it. All primitive religion begins therefore from cosmology.

If anyone objects to our bringing cosmology into religion he quite misapprehends the nature of the difficulty. We would ever so gladly leave cosmology alone and the cosmos too, if it would only leave us alone. Men did not make a theory of the world and then subject their religion to it. They turned to religion in the hope of finding a tolerable cosmology, that is, of finding some interpretation or meaning of the world which would enable them to face it with a good heart.

When however men learnt to think, there were many to whom the natural world of outer experience, impersonal and insensate, seemed rather beneath than above understanding. The true order of things lay in the intelligence. God was the Supreme Intelligence.

There were then two different bases to start from. Every thought of God that could be framed must be a reflex of, or an abstraction from, is conditioned by, one of these two—either experience of the world and its happenings, or experience of man and his thinkings. It was not what he meant to do, but man did after all make a cosmological and a metaphysical religion because

he could not help it. I admit that such religion must be useless. If we take cosmology to include natural science, and metaphysics to include the ideas and methods of human thought, they have many difficulties strictly their own for which we may trust them to find a solution. If, however, we consider them more deeply in relation to human life, obviously they cannot themselves provide an answer to the perplexities which are found and expressed in them. Else would not cosmology and metaphysics have ceased to be written about, for their worshippers once purged would have had no more consciousness of perplexity ?

When, therefore, men fled to religion, fled to the thought of God, as a refuge from the world and as the ultimate of their own ideas, that thought of God was their own thought, full of the difficulties and contradictions they had brought with them. They were but fleeing to themselves, and the world following hard after took their religion captive. Whatever was to be a deliverance of the human mind could not be merely a mind-product ; it must be a message. The contradictions which were made in human thought could only be solved by a Gospel, by something from without.

' Must not that Gospel be simple ? ' The term is misleading. Certainly, the Gospel itself must be and is simple. But just because it is simple, if we insist on a simple application in a world full of complexities and contradictions, we shall only get confusion. Love and justice are so obviously and really simple that we all agree about their desirability, but in most of our practical questions, social and political, the only obvious thing is that the partizans on both sides differ so strongly about their obvious justice that they have forgotten love

altogether. I called a bank a 'temple of faith,' and faith is simple, but I never supposed we could run a bank 'simply' on faith.

I fully admit therefore that cosmology and metaphysics, which are human ways of thinking, cannot supply an answer to the questions of human life, nor perhaps even supply the form of the answer, though of this I am less sure. But are they not providing the form of the questions? Are they not stating the difficulties? If the reader does not like these technical polysyllabic words, neither do I. In plain English, if there is a Gospel at all, there are two problems it must face—the meaning of the world men have to live in, and the meaning of the thoughts men form about its truth and purpose.

What sort of gospel must this be, and what sort of a religion will it require? The modern distinction between the religious and the cosmological seems to me entirely false. We may start in two ways. We may have a humanitarian religion, based on our notion of human needs and conditions, or we may have a cosmological religion, based on our notion of what the world is really like. Either of these two may be primitive or may be metaphysical according to the amount of thinking men put into them, but since they spring from human thought, neither can be a gospel. When God revealed Himself to men according to the Gospel, then we might have a theological religion, based on what we had learnt of God.

The message that should be a gospel of deliverance must then be, first, of a God Absolute, in Whom we live and move and have our being, Who is above all and before all, Self-contained and Self-perfect. The God Who could help us in face of the world could not

be dependent on us nor on the world for the fulness and activity of His existence. But, secondly, He must be Self-expressed in Creation and in converse with men.

Could any doctrine meet these diverse requirements? Christianity certainly believed that they were met by the doctrine of the Trinity. Mind, thought and will are the three elements of our own self-hood and personality, each involved in every act, and each taking its proper place in that act, distinct yet wholly inseverable, a Trinity, three and yet one. For if I think, there is implied a mind which thinks, a thought which the mind is thinking, a will which acts in thinking. If I act, the act which is of my will is the expression of the thought which my mind has. Of these the man constitutes a living person, a centre of movement, not a mere part of the general drift of things. Here is the type of the Trinity of God—the Father and the Son, Word or Thought, and the Holy Spirit, Who is Power or Love, the Activity of the Will.

Our personality is imperfect because we are dependent on what is outside of us for the material of our thought, and our thought is made up of different thoughts; it is never the whole realisation of our minds, still less is it the whole truth of things. Think as we may, we can only know what seems true to us, and we can only desire what seems good to us, and these must be different from, at best part of, the truth which God knows and the plan He purposes. If God be what we have taken Him to be, His Thought is perfect and single, not dependent upon what things are but the cause thereof. In God only is Personality complete.

'This doctrine of the Trinity is a human way of thinking.' Doubtless, for if men think there is no other way. 'But if we apply human analogies to God, we

are making God in our own image.' May be, but let us consider. All theories must come from our minds, for there is nowhere else they can be formed. We are subject to space and time, and we apply the ideas to nature. It happens that they are applicable, for to space and time nature also is subject. We find in ourselves thought and feeling. Children apply these ideas to stones and flowers as well as to animals and people. Presently we find that there are limits to their applicability. We apply to God the thought of personality as we find it in ourselves. Perhaps it is all wrong, for certainly we are making God in our image. Quite so, but perhaps it is not all wrong, because we are made in His.

If this doctrine of God as Trinity had been constructed by human thinking purely in order to meet the obvious difficulties of human thought, I quite admit that the most which could be said for it would be that it was the most plausible, possibly the only plausible and consistent, hypothesis, and one does not build the faith of a life on a hypothesis which is not verified. But then the doctrine of the Trinity never was constructed in this way, although some philosophic thinkers came astonishingly near it. The Christians reached it, not by abstract thinking, but by thinking over the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Who was this Who called God His own Father, Who showed Himself as the Ruler of all natural powers, Who acted as the judge of men, assumed the right to lay down all moral law, Who declared faith in Himself to be the way of life and salvation, Who by His death had triumphed over death and sin? It is true that Jesus Christ had stated no theory nor explanation of the exact nature, He very rarely made any claim, of Lordship; He continuously assumed and exercised it.

We are not left to agree or differ according as we judge of Him ; we can only submit or rebel, for we are being judged by Him. Yet the question remained. Men could not well help asking, what was the relation of Christ to God, which, without being fully stated, was yet being so manifestly assumed and exercised?

Primitive Christianity began from simple faith in Jesus Christ, but plainly that was to them faith in God, Who had thus revealed Himself, taken our nature and redeemed us from sin. 'Can we not go back to this simple faith?' By all means. Our whole business is to find and make sure we keep the road thither.

The early Christians to whom I referred were not in the least interested in speculations about the world, for they were convinced it was soon to pass away—which was more or less true, though not in the fashion they expected. When the new world did come, it was also not quite of the kind they expected ; but God evidently meant that most of them should live in it, which they seem to have found as troublesome and unsatisfactory a business as we do. One result of living in a world was that Christianity had got to face a world, and to find an answer to various world-questions hinted at above, which before no one had thought over.

Some of us have an idea that in the third and fourth century Christians developed a sudden passion for metaphysics and speculative theories. That is false to history and even a little absurd. Of course there were men who loved being clever ; and they were a great nuisance as they always are. Also there were some men with a real power of steady thinking and reasoning, and they could be very useful, as they sometimes are. Equally of course most people were rather bored by their efforts, suspicious of them, unable to see

any difference between steady thinking and mere cleverness, rather apt to prefer the cleverness, very much as we do. But there do come times when men, however reluctantly, must find out what they are doing and what they mean. Some of the answers men began to offer were helpful; some were confused and inconsistent, leading to the most impossible consequences, but the Church for the most part let men find their own way without being greatly put out.

In the fourth century a certain Arius advanced a very definite position, and stuck to it, consequences or none. To use the singularly lucid modern terms I quoted above, he affirmed that above all was the abstract Deity, the Unknown. Jesus Christ, Who came to us, was a Divinity, greater than all angels or men, begotten before the world, but still very far from God Himself, only a created being. Then the Church began to wake up to the necessity of making up her mind what she believed in, and at least she was clear so far that it was not this. She believed in God. A man might believe that an Ultimate existed, Unknown, and Unattainable. But that was not something a man could believe in. Men should worship God, but for this same reason to worship anything less than God is pure heathenism. It is God for whom man is athirst. The Gospel, if it was a Gospel, was and could be a Gospel only about God, not about 'Divinities,' nor about super-Archangels. This, therefore, was the decision of Nicaea. Jesus Christ, He Who was made known to us and redeemed us, was God, 'of the Essence of God,' 'of one Substance with the Father.'

These words might seem simple and clear enough. If people had not found so many entanglements in them, I should certainly have thought they were. Even

in that day, however, there were men—whom the historians call semi-Arians—who objected that the phrases were philosophy, that they 'were not in Scripture,' and so forth. It was very soon evident that they were not in fact objecting to theories, for they had theories of their own. They objected to saying that Jesus Christ was *one with* the Father, because they would not say more than that He was *like* the Father. Did this really make any difference? The semi-Arians said that it was quite sufficient; it was indeed better than the Nicene phrase. It presented Christ in His own proper work, without unnecessary 'judgments about a Person.' We had been ignorant of God's true nature. 'Christ came that He might show it to us, not in words but in deed.' God was loving—like this; and powerful—like this; and in the habit of doing this and this kind of good. What more could we want? What indeed? Only those troublesome orthodox would go on insisting that it was not even the beginning of Christianity. 'What more could they want?' Oh, nothing except God, and without Him nothing else was of any use at all. To know God's qualities—which a man can get out of a dictionary if he wants to—is not to know God, and it does not bring us any nearer to Him; it is but an explanation of the depth of what sunders us.

This semi-Arian theory was absurd on its own showing. God was revealed as love; yet He loved us so little that He would not do the one thing that we longed for, He would not come to us—unless indeed where He had been revealed in power, He nevertheless had so little power that He could not. 'But He had sent someone LIKE Himself?' Like God? What can the words mean? There is nothing on earth, neither

in the heavens above nor in the depths beneath, who is in the least like God in this sense. And if there were, who cares? Do we propose to say that such will do equally well? What heathen idolatry is this which starts finding substitutes for God? If anyone disagrees with me here, I shall not appeal to any theological treatise. Let him search out the first orphan child, and try whether he can explain that there are many other good women as well as mother who has gone home, and that some of them are like her. If he can do it, if the words do not stick in his throat, I will promise to argue with him no further.

'There was somebody very like God, astonishingly like, and He gave us the knowledge of God.' Yes? And Who was it Who bore for us the curse of sin, broke down the separation between us and God, brought us light and immortality and life by bringing us into union with Himself? Was that also this most excellent substitute? Then here is the gospel, that we have clean missed God and God does not care. Yet we did love Him. 'Somebody like God'!

'This is a mere travesty of what was meant or of what anybody means to-day.' I would to God it were, but of course it is a travesty of what anybody intends to mean or ever goes on meaning. Out of such absurdities one must come in one direction or another, and sooner or later one does; I am only urging the immense importance of finding out what we do mean and saying it distinctly that we and others may keep it before us. We argue against theories and theoretical statements, but we do not thereby succeed in keeping theory out of anything whatever. We only succeed in blinding ourselves to the theories, that is, the principles and ideas, which we are unconsciously accepting and on which we

are acting. There is no one so much at the mercy of theories as those who scoff at them, and have lost therefore the power of testing and criticising them.

The meaning of Athanasius and 'the Orthodox' was as simple, as deep and wonderful, as that of the child who 'wants mother.' Those who would not face the simplicity of it were just those who brought in all these confusing ideas about likeness and attributes, and who had gained nothing when they had done it for the reason stated. They could not seriously mean or go on meaning it. They slipped into it; they said and did not mean it; they played with it and declined to consider its consequences. In the end there was nothing to mean at all, except that God was a Name for nothing in particular, and that Christ was a very nice person (about whom historically we know very little except that He seems to have known very little about Himself), and that we also are very nice, or that some of us are if we take the trouble. 'If Christ be not God in the true sense of the word, then God is darkness and in Him is no light at all.'

I thought it worth while to follow the main line of this controversy in order to illustrate my point that the Church certainly thought that in the Creeds she was stating facts, and that she was not giving philosophical or metaphysical interpretations of them. 'Can it, however, be denied that this word *Essence* or *Substance* belongs to metaphysical language?'

The whole idea is an entire misunderstanding of the very meaning of metaphysics. Hegel—and there is hardly any higher authority to quote on this subject—said that metaphysics neither had nor wanted a language or terminology of its own. It was entirely concerned with the meaning and implication of the commonest

words and ideas. I said above that the Godhead of Christ ' was the very core and substance of the Gospel.' Metaphysically I am very much interested in the theory of Substances or Essences. I rather fancy my opinions on this important topic are somewhat different from those held by many modern students in philosophy. Are my readers anxious to hear my views? No? I was afraid they wouldn't be, and I am afraid they are right. Do my theories matter a farthing rushlight to the intelligibility of the sentence? Will the physics' professor contend that the farmer's wife does not know what boiling water means because she does not know the mysteries of its physical metabolism? Nay, but does the professor know? I grant that he can go a few steps further. Anyhow the old lady knows enough to make very good tea and do the potatoes decently, in regard to which she is probably two holes up over some physical professors.

Common words mean what common words do mean. Professors of physics and metaphysics try to find out as much as they can of all the wonders which underlie them and which underlie our belief. I have a great respect for professors; I may be one myself some day; but in the cramped atmosphere of the lecture room it is much too easy to forget that we are studying a meaning, and that having a meaning or knowing what one means, and having adequate ideas or theories as to what is implied in our meaning, are very different things.

' What did the Fathers mean by substance '? They meant just what everybody means, just what I meant in the sentence quoted—that which makes a thing what it is. This was the substance of the Gospel, because without this it would not have been a Gospel, or it would have a quite different Gospel. ' But what is this

mysterious "substance" which makes a "thing" what it is?' Ah, now that *is* metaphysics. There are plenty of reasons why that is a question worth thinking over, but it is not so important that anyone need be bothered over it unless he wants to, and I fancy the majority would prefer not.

'But the Fathers had a theory of substance.' Without wishing to be disrespectful, I should suppose the Holy Fathers of the fourth century were uncommonly like our very reverend Fathers in the twentieth century. Some of them 'did not go in for metaphysics' and had no theory at all. The rest had no theory because they had a great many theories. Some of their theories were very suggestive, and some perhaps rather absurd. They are of great interest to the student of historical philosophy, but there is no need to consider them as undergraduate essays.

'The fourth century interpreted the Trinity in categories of Substance.' This is the final stricture of modern criticism. For once I shall not contradict, for I will be frank even when I am put to shame. Certainly because of my ignorance, probably by reason of my density, I never could make out what the phrase meant.

(3) Finally, I promised to deal with the use and origin of the Creeds, and the kind of authority which belongs to the statements implied in them. I hope indeed that what I have said above will explain a good deal of their use and origin, but I want now to consider these in regard to authority. Why after all should we accept these words in preference to any other?

The Creeds, or at least the Nicene Creed, comes to us with the authority of Church Councils. What is a Council, and what authority can it claim? These are strangely important questions because of the light

thrown by their answers on the idea of Church action, but in some ways they are difficult questions.

Our minds are naturally taken up with the idea of a parliament which is a meeting of representatives elected to decide what is for our convenience. The majority outvotes the minority, for the convenience of the majority is the most we can hope to reach. But a Council was not in the least like a Parliament. It was not a meeting of elected representatives. Except when drawing up rules or ' canons,' it was not concerned with convenience but with truth. Consequently, as I will show presently, it did not decide by majorities. The Councils of which we hear are a mere fraction of the Councils which were always being held. They met several times a year, partly for business, partly to talk things over, and rather to make a common mind on questions than to ' decide ' them.

In this way Councils were more like a conference of learned men, but the bishops did not meet as learned men, but as bishops, that is, as men responsible for the care and teaching of common and simple people. In those days, as now, there were many theories, theories that were clever and theories that were ingenious. Then as now, there were some bishops—for bishops are amazingly like other people—who were pleased with new ideas, and many who were suspicious of them. The Church as a Church was not concerned with clevernesses and ingenuities. It was very much concerned to find what real solid meaning lay at the back of them, and that trenchant determination to face out the consequences and implications contained in a theory was the great distinction of early ages.

As we begin to reach a solid meaning, two questions will come up. First, is there any real usefulness about

this meaning, helpful to common people? That is not a question we shall expect to 'decide' off-hand, for that only is proved useful which in practice we can use. But, secondly, though a theory may look ever so plausible and ever so simple, is it Christian? That is a very solemn question. Those who cannot see that Christianity has any meaning of its own, or is other than a label which one may attach to anything one chooses, will of course see no meaning in the question. For those to whom Christianity is a real gospel, it is a question which must always be faced. It is, however, not a question to which any one should be in a hurry to force an answer, nor which can be answered, until he is quite sure he has got to the bottom of what is meant.

Again, on the one hand, a theory or view unchristian in its consequences may be held or put forward only because its inconsistency is not realised. That is a thing we all do often enough; it will be a weakness or a danger, but it is not more than that. On the other hand, an unchristian view may be held definitely and with a full consciousness of its consequences, because those who hold it have committed themselves to another gospel. If, for instance, one group of men believes that Christianity is a Gospel of how God became man and redeemed us, and another group seriously and continuously insists that this neither did nor could happen, and that the true Gospel is only an ethical teaching about love or about what God is *like*, plainly the first group must hold that the second group has ceased to be Christian. Some time or other a decision must be come to. I am pointing out that when that decision has to be made, which of the two groups is the majority and which is the minority will make no difference at all.

I quite admit that Councils, even very big Councils, often went wrong, for they were Councils of men. Sometimes they were too impatient to get to the bottom of a theory; sometimes they had too many theories of their own, or were overpersuaded by those who had, but their decisions were not final; they were steps in the working out of a question. The doctrine of the Trinity had been discussed for a century; at Nicea it was 'decided.' Whereupon the discussion went on again for fifty-six years. Only after working the matter through from end to end, trying every possible hypothesis and every possible phrase, men were forced back to the conclusion and to the phraseology from which they had so long shrunk. The Œcumenical authority of a Council is not, like the authority of parliament, inherent in its constitution; it depends on the acceptance of its results by the Christian consciousness of the Church.

The authority of the Creeds, therefore, rests on experience. The modern religious mind is full of 'experience,' but the word is being used in two different ways. I have urged that the modern use was full of dangers which were not realised, but I have no desire to reject experience. I maintain that no religion *built out* of experience can be a gospel, but I contend also that whatever is a gospel must *meet* experience. If we compare the Church's use of experience with the modern use, we shall find points of profound significance for which I would ask the most earnest attention.

In all our material life and science we assume that our experience is an experience of real things and forces, which it is most important that we should observe correctly, for all our fancies of what is around us will be judged by the truth, and any error may bring on

us the most unwelcome results. The tendency of our modern religious thinking is to treat religious experience as if it were itself the reality, its own standard and its own judge. Then experience ceases to be an experience of something ; it becomes just an experience of an experience. Religious experience is unquestionably a nice state, therefore anything that makes us feel nice is religion.

The material things of life act round us externally, but spiritual things are spiritually discerned. In religion, we are not looking at something in a test-tube, but at something within us. Even in material affairs, experience or observation is a very difficult matter to handle. If a man has no theories, he will not know what he is looking at ; but if a man has theories, he is apt to imagine he sees, anyhow he is apt to see only, the things he expected or wanted to see. If this is true even of things outside ourselves, it is much more true when the object of experience or observation is our own feelings.

Again, religion is of necessity selective. Some heathen have taken *all* experience as the ground of religion, and much of their religion was very horrible, because a good deal of experience is very horrible. But if we make up our minds that religion is good, then we shall only include good experiences as religious experiences, but we are our own judges of which experiences we count good and therefore religious. When we appeal to our experience as a proof, we ourselves select the evidence.

The Church appeals to experience and personal experience, bidding us ' Taste and see that the Lord is gracious,' but with a full sense and many warnings of the limitations of personal experience, of how easily and

in how many ways it may fail us, of how long we may have to wait for the fulness of its coming. Experience, if it is ultimately of things, is directly and in itself only of effects. In itself, therefore, it is individual, but the Gospel is one and common to all, a bond of unity, not accommodated to perpetuate our separation. It was not formed, it cannot be judged, it cannot even be apprehended as a whole, by individual experience.

For this reason the Church has a profound, sometimes it looks like an exaggerated, suspicion of personal ability, for exceptional power makes a man a very bad witness to the common and simple truth. The professors of ethics have much to say about love well worth listening to, but we shall draw our evidence and facts best from mothers and little children who do love, but who do not attend ethical lectures. Undoubtedly there is a great deal which ability and only ability could do, but ability is not the true judge of its own usefulness. The work it does is useful if it can be used. The work of the clever men was liable to be judged, first, by bishops who as pastors would have to use it. It must in the end be judged by common people to whom it must be useful.

'But we want to have the Nicene theology re-expressed in modern terms, accordant with the forms and categories of modern thought.' I am not sure what this means. Taking it simply, it is a most reasonable and proper desire. All set forms are apt to lose force through familiarity, and require de-polarising. But I have been under the impression that our theology and history tutors already spend a certain proportion of their time in this very work of exposition, and I assume they do so in reasonably modern English. I have imagined that our students

also may have tried to express the Nicene theology in essays.

The demand then is somewhat puzzling. What is the precise object of asking for a re-statement of Nicene theology, when such re-statements can notoriously be heard in a multitude of lecture rooms or bought for a few shillings—or even sixpence—at any theological book-shop, unless after all it is a demand for a re-statement, not of the Nicene, but of another and different, theology. To that also there are no objections worth making, since, with or without objection, statements of new and different theologies, all different, are being put out about once a week all through the publishing season. But if intellectual honesty and clearness of mind are worth anything, there are very grave objections indeed to putting out a different theology and calling it a ' re-expression ' of the Nicene. The phrase ' re-expressing ' in this sense is very modern, but the thing itself is very old indeed, and a new coat of paint and a new nameplate do not make it a bit less unlovely.

If, however, the proposal is quite honest, but it is desired that we should have a new formula in more modern philosophical forms,—wondering if this is seriously proposed—I can only ask *which* modern forms ? Shall we go to Oxford or Cambridge, Scotland, America or Germany ? Are we to use the categories of Idealism or Neo-Realism, of the Pragmatists or Naturalists or Psychologists ? Or shall we call a central congress, representative of all schools ? When we get our new phraseology, how long will it stop modern ? I fancy we shall need a new congress every five years, and I doubt if we shall get one to agree before the next is due. And what, finally, becomes of our modern objection to importing metaphysics ?

If this is too palpably absurd, does the proposal mean that we shall drop our common Creeds altogether? 'We do not want Nicaea; we have the Scriptures, and from that each man draws his faith.' In some ways this is quite obvious. If any man is asked, or asks himself, 'What is it that you believe?' he will reply by a summary statement of the principal points. But that statement will be, first, confined to the points believed to be in the questioner's mind; secondly, to what was at the moment present to the mind of him who answered. Point is met by point, and one mind by another. This is as it should be, but it is not all. Not every question turns on Christianity as a whole, nor is the whole at every moment present to every answerer's mind, yet Christianity is a whole gospel, and that we may keep its wholeness before our minds, here is a statement drawn up very deliberately, after long experience of many questions, ratified by ages of the most diverse experiences.

A writer writes a book, trying to grapple with the whole of a complex question. Everybody, who thinks the book worth talking about or writing about, will give their summary statements of what they take to be its main proposals. If the book was worth it, the author might draw up his own authorised summary. That would not take the place of the book itself. He would be saying—'These are the main points. Read the Great Book itself that you may see their significance.' Of course authors do not do this, first, because they have no right to suppose their books are worth making into a Creed; but then Scripture is. Secondly, however, they do not do it, because they cannot. Supposing that the book had a wonderful and deep significance that would make it worth while,

it would require long pondering, long controversies, long experience, before that significance would begin to crystallise itself and stand out clear. Possibly, if the book is worth anything, the writer may know something of what he meant by it—in ten or twenty years—when everybody else has forgotten it, and if he hasn't forgotten it himself. But Scripture is not a book which has been forgotten.

Once upon a time the Church began with a teaching, with the Scriptures, with a very simple belief. Presently she found what a multitude of questions life, experience, the world, were demanding that that belief should answer. After many years of thought, by much effort, through many blunders, the Church worked her way to clear issues and finally to a clear answer. Are we now to go back to the simple and primitive? Is it necessary to remind the twentieth century of a process called Evolution, and that, even if it were possible for men to go back to the primitive, it would only mean that they would have to work through much the same process again? Shall we go back also to primitive law, to primitive politics? Have we not yet unlearned the fallacy of Rousseau and his 'primitive savage'? The primitive developed because it had to develop, and going back is not progress.

After all, the history of the Church may be, as a distinguished writer holds, little better than a history of human error. But what of ourselves? We have an immense belief that the Holy Spirit is guiding us. Exactly, and the early Church had exactly the same belief. If they were wrong, what ground have we for our own confidence? Is the twenty-first century to sweep out our efforts also with the same contempt?

We do then appeal to the authority of the past, of ancient Councils and ancient Creeds, but with no assumption that a particular group of clever men a long time ago possessed some peculiar gift of infallible inspiration. If there is no real basis in Christianity at all, then no doubt there is no object in retaining old statements thereof, nor apparently in constructing new ones. If, however, Christianity has a real basis and substance, then we are suspicious of those proposals of modernised statements just on that very ground, that it seems to imply a peculiar gift of infallible inspiration possessed by clever men now, who understand what no one before them understood. We are suspicious of clever men just because we think so much of common men. It is against this notion of infallible inspirations and 'experiences' of one age or of another that we, Anglicans in particular, appeal to the common inspiration and experience of all. The Holy Spirit is not the Spirit of the twentieth century, but the Eternal Spirit. We vindicate His work in the past, that we may have faith in Him for the present; we protest against 'going back' because we have through Him a hope of going forward.

But the meaning of the authority of common experience, of the experience of the past, can only be understood if we realise the kind of questions to which it was applied. Undoubtedly there are many questions bearing upon new problems, practical and intellectual, of politics or social organisation, of natural sciences or new phases of thought, which to the common man seem mere subtleties, any of which may nevertheless be important; some may be of great importance. To them also the Gospel has its message, its help, its applications; but since they are modern and difficult, since these applica-

tions and inferences require much delicate thinking over, it is equally useless and mischievous to fetter the efforts of thinkers by 'authority' which could only be the authority of other thinkers.

When, however, we come to the simple question, what is the Christianity which is being applied, which is to provide an answer, it is the Christianity by which we all live, simple and common as well as clever and learned. Then the Church forced her way—not without much trouble—to a simple answer. I have given that worked out in the fourth century. As Christians we believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. If we believe in Jesus Christ, this is not an alternative or additional belief. We believe in Him as our Lord, because He is the Only Begotten Son of God, Begotten of the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, Begotten not Created, being of one Substance with the Father, through Whom all things were made.

A similar simplicity forced its way through the controversies of the fifth century. 'What God assumed that He redeemed.' If God took to Himself only the limited and exclusive personality of one, Jesus of Nazareth, what is this Super-man of Nestorius to us common people? What is the good of admiration? Or, have we also caught an ambition to be Super-men? What are the beauty of teaching and the wonder of a life to those who know only too bitterly how little they can follow the one or imitate the other? Some of us can manage an aeroplane, but who are we to scale moral heavens, any more than the physical? If Christianity can tell us how God took to Himself that common human nature which we all share, but which is whole to none of us, as only God could take; can tell us how

God made out of that a redeemed humanity, as only God could make, into which we can enter, this is a Gospel, and it is the Christian Gospel. There is no other.

'But the fifth century Councils did lay down decisions about Nature and Personality, which are full, the one of metaphysical, and the other of psychological, entanglements.' Certainly they are, but concerning both, the Council knew and meant exactly what the collier's wife knows and means, viz. that the natures of bread and cheese and of the human body are different, that her own personality, that of her old man, and those of the kiddies are separate personalities, demanding, hungrily demanding, separate apportionments of bread and cheese. If I have been unduly sarcastic over professors and the learned, let me here apologise and withdraw. There are professors who have helped me mightily to understand colliers and mothers and little children, what they were and what they actually did mean. To them I am unspeakably grateful. It is only when professors cease to be interested in such people, want to explain to me some new kind of world and meaning which common people do not live in or have, that the professors cease to interest me.

The Council said and meant that God was and remained God, in His own nature, and that man was and remains man in his. They said that this human nature had been brought into union with God, not in the fragmentary form which constitutes the peculiarity of a human person, but in the inclusive personality of the Divine Logos.

But if even this is too difficult, let us be cheered. Though the Council asserted it, they refused to put it or anything else into the Creed. They said it was there

already. They had said no more than that it was the One Lord, the Only Begotten Son of God, Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and took flesh by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered, and was buried, and the third day He arose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end.

Yet even if we have thus learnt that there is in God salvation, which by God has been made a salvation for us, plain is it that by no effort of our own can we come to it, since it is impossible for the self by itself to escape from self. We individuals can be drawn into a redeemed humanity in God only by the operation, the sending forth of the power, of God Who is the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Life-giver, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified,—one God, blessed for ever. Here is a gospel. Here is hope for men, and hope calleth to faith, and faith is the stay of love, wherein all are perfected.

Is this the faith in God we hold to and this the road to it? Do we thus believe in God Who made us, because the Son of God hath redeemed us and the Spirit of God giveth us life? If not, let us say so frankly and let us say what new gospel—if any—the twentieth century has produced. But the rejection of the gospel we have been taught, the substitution of another, the reasons which justify that procedure, open a different issue; they should not be carried through under cover of objections to a form of statement.

Meanwhile all down the centuries the music of these words has rung. The long road is littered with the broken remnants of Modernisms, abandoned, forgotten, earth-buried, moulded, dust-covered. They served their day, strutting in the sun ; ' the *zeit-geist* breathed upon them and they are gone,' for there is nothing so very old-fashioned as the desire to be up-to-date. If these words have survived them all, is it not that they never were part of a temporary system of technical thinking, but merely the trenchant expression of a common fact in the simplest and most common language, chosen for that very reason, ratified by the common sense of common people of the most varied ways of thinking ? For what was being stated was not a form of thinking, but a fact to be thought about. Thus we believe of Him in Whom we believe that faith and worship may be one.

CHAPTER XIV.

ANGLICANISM.

If we were dealing with a question primarily of abstract theology, my case would be now complete. So far as my power to put it is concerned,—here is the Catholic, and here is the Protestant, principle. Here are the places which each would seem to occupy in the completeness of religious life. This and this would seem to be the result of trying to frame a religious life upon either one of them taken more or less independently —I say 'more or less', because it is absolutely impossible to get a religious life out of either without some help from the other. Just these are actually the results we do find, more or less according to the degree in which they have been independently followed.

As an observer I have done my best to get at the facts, and as a thinker I have tried to understand and explain them. In the practical religious world I have neither status nor influence; it would be, therefore, absurd for me to put forward proposals of the kind which belong to practical ecclesiastical politics. If we can get any clear comprehension of what we want to reach, really able men, our chosen leaders, will soon make up the road there.

Some aspects of practical politics even the most theoretically minded person must face. I have

maintained that we cannot make up any real unity between Catholics and Protestants until we have found what is the true meaning, and thence what reconciliation there can be, of the Catholic and Protestant principles. When we have found a reconciliation of these sitting in our study, realised it on our knees in prayer, tested it on our feet at work, we shall still have to make it an actuality in the uniting of men and systems.

Seeking an actual unity, we cannot altogether shirk considering the actual condition of the systems we are to bring together. Of the Protestant or Non-Conformist bodies I shall say nothing whatever. I speak *to* them; it would ill become me to speak *of* them, otherwise than I am forced to do in the course of my analysis. It would be presumptuous for me as an outsider either to criticise or praise that of which I have no thorough knowledge. What then are the Catholic men, bodies, or systems, to be actually considered? In the first place, and in the last place, we shall have to think of the great and wonderful organisations of the Roman and Greek Churches, the former of which is in especial the largest, the most widely spread, the most closely knit, in many ways the most effective, of all religious bodies. I say we must, and we ought to, think of them first. It is necessary to say it because we are so particularly apt to forget them—forgetfulness being a comfortable refuge from hopelessness. Yet it will be a poor reunion which leaves two-thirds of professed Christians out of count.

Our inability to solve a problem is not a sound reason for forgetting it, but it may be quite a sound reason for passing on to something more manageable. I may hope that my effort will suggest something to those Catholics who are not of our communion, but I have no

justification for expecting so much. I leave this side to men of greater ability, weight, insight. Reunion must deal ultimately with the Roman difficulty, but, although we must have that in mind from the first, it does not seem to me we can deal with it first.

Catholicism, therefore, so far as I am concerned, must mean Anglicanism, and here I am in a great difficulty. If I confess the weakness of Anglicanism, the need of help in which it stands, I may be preparing the way for surrender, but obviously I ought to be speaking to my own people. There is no use asking others for an assistance to the rendering of which our own obstinacy is the only barrier. If I speak primarily to Non-Conformists, I do so primarily because of the help I believe the Church has to give to them. I confess our weaknesses, first, because I know and I want to make plain that the help is not all on one side, but, secondly, because I think I can show that those weaknesses, while they seem to make our helpfulness doubtful, do in fact make it really possible, a helpfulness which really can be used.

There are, however, certain points on which I do not think it worth while to say anything at length. It may be observed that I have nowhere made any allusion to the difficulty of Establishment, which many think the most burning topic of all. I have deliberately omitted it, in the first place, because all experience shows that its influence at least upon the question of reunion, is very much less than is supposed. Disestablishment might effect the machinery for solving our differences—though it is very doubtful if it would—it will not affect the differences themselves by one iota. In England the 'Church' is established, and this fact weighs heavily upon our mind. In Ireland, America, Scotland and

the Colonies, the 'Church' is not established, and the relations between the different bodies are exactly what they are here. In the second place, I am not anxious to discuss the question because, though no doubt it has its religious side, it is primarily a political question.

At present we are in the position of rival sects. Our rivalry is the direct cause of the anomalous *form* of establishment. No doubt it makes any form of establishment of one body an anomaly. But then the rivalry itself is an anomaly. While we are in this position, the practical question can only appear as a quarrel, in which one rival by various political combinations forces the other to submit or to accept its own view of what is just, what is right, what is for the good of religion or of the nation. If we were agreed on the religious question, we could solve the practical question together very easily. But with all the multitude of side issues involved, I do not see how we can expect to get a reasonable solution, one which will not leave us full of the anger and bitterness in which it was wrought, till we have learnt more of one another's aims, ideals, motives, in other directions. I shall not, therefore, discuss it further.

I also do not think it worth while to do more than to allude to the extraordinary idea that it is somehow the 'gentlemanly thing' to be an Episcopalian, and that a moderate—generally very moderate—Church observance is connected with one's title to social superiority. Nor need I discuss that view of Episcopacy which is sometimes described as 'Prelacy.' However irritating these side issues may be, and seriously as the Church has suffered from them, I ought not to assume or even suggest that serious and thoughtful men, seeking what is of religious truth and

spiritual need, would allow themselves to be affected by what were so palpably adventitious abuses and corruptions, the fruits of the position in which we find ourselves.

The weaknesses we do need to face seriously are those belonging to our spiritual and religious efficiency. I am afraid our weaknesses here are all the more a stumbling-block because they occur in just those directions which Non-Conformists most appreciate. Let us see what others can say about us, how we may look to them at our worst. 'The Presbyterians have a very effective system of government. A great leader among them once described the Church of England as "the worst governed body in Christendom." They have a marvellous system of ministerial training. I suppose it would be generally agreed that the Anglican clergy are less taught, and make less serious study of, their business, not merely than any other ministry, but than any professional class in existence. The Non-Conformist body is full of energy, zeal, readiness to organise activity of all kinds; to them we seem incredibly wooden and lifeless. Only our fund of quiet self-satisfaction prevents our knowing that the Non-Conformists have far outstripped us in almost every field where new work was wanted. Some bodies have learning, some have fire, some have organisation; the only distinctive gift of Anglicanism is its "starch."'

'This is not the worst. Certainly we cannot lay claim in these directions. If we have anything to give, it is doctrinal, sacramental, "Catholic." But this last descriptive word—which sums the other two—is in all common usage given only to the Romans, and that common usage is very significant. Practical men can

only deal with practical forces, and in practice the Church is not Catholic. The larger mass of the clergy, and a considerable band of laity, important rather by their energy than by mere numbers, are " High Church " in a somewhat narrow and negative sense. They have a very strong conviction that Episcopacy alone is right and of divine foundation ; everybody else is in schism. But many clergy and vast numbers of the laity are openly or at heart Undenominational. They prefer the Church from habit, or for reasons political or social, but they have no belief in it otherwise.'

' Catholicism in the sense in which I have used the term—that is, as a primarily sacramental faith in a real and objective gift of a Divine Presence to worship —is not the belief of the Church. It is the belief of a small section within it, which has only just won its way to a bare toleration. It has been and is flatly repudiated by the majority of the Church's leaders ; it is bitterly disliked and suspected by the larger mass of the laity, to whom its very meaning and aims are scarcely known. " Church worship " is not in practice distinguished from Non-Conformist worship by its essentially sacramental character, but by its use of "book prayers," short sermons, and the rigidly exclusive use of an ordained ministry. Where the Church of England has gone abroad into America and into the Colonies, these have continued to be her hall-mark. No doubt the Church endeavours to provide administrations of the sacrament for those who desire it, but wherever in a Bush township you enquire for the Roman Church, you will be told at once when there will be a " mass." If you enquire for the " Church of England," you will be told the time of Matins, or perhaps Evensong.'

Here then are the charges against us—charges which many bring openly and contemptuously, which many who have no desire to be contemptuous yet believe to be true. What are we Churchmen to say to them? We might very reasonably say that they were exaggerated, and that things were not as bad with us as all that. We might also say that, if it comes to making criticisms, we in our turn——. But then what is the good? The charges are only too true, why should we cavil over the exact measure of their truth? We confess our failures before God; we lament over them among ourselves; shall we begin extenuating them before other men? We are asked if we can give Non-Conformity any help. It is plain our critics think we have none to give. Is not that the simple truth, and yet is it not the very nature of the help which we believe exists for them that it is a help which it is not of us nor of men, but of God, to give?

Suppose, however, we change the form of our question. Has the Church of England any help to give? That is a very different question, for the Church is a very different thing from Churchmen. The difference wants some consideration. Some of my readers may be aware that in India or China it is not unknown for a heathen father, who fears his son may turn Christian, to send the boy to study in Europe. Probably he will lose any religious belief he has got—I believe we have known this kind of thing among ourselves, but at least he will not be a Christian. This ought to cause us great searchings of heart. On the one hand Christianity ought not to be judged purely from Christians, least of all from nominal Christians. On the other hand Christianity cannot entirely disown responsibility for the results which have grown up under

it. I have a right to plead that the Church is not the same as Churchmen, but I have no right to speak as if they had nothing to do with one another.

These criticisms therefore want very serious consideration if we are to realise how far they do or do not invalidate our belief in the Church's usefulness. Approaching the matter from this side I can put forward explanations and extenuations of our actual state which would be worthless if I were merely replying to charges. The criticisms fall into two groups. Of those which concern our practical failings I need say nothing further than I have already said. They are just those which follow from a system too exclusively formal and official. The second group of criticisms asserts that what I have called the Catholic position is not in fact held by the mass of Churchmen. The word *hold* is here somewhat ambiguous. Certainly I must admit that the mass of Church people have not *realised* the Catholic position.

If we compare the case of the Church with that of Christianity itself we may see how different a man's realisation is from what he holds, or at least from that by which he is held. There are multitudes of people who have the very vaguest idea what the essential principles of Christianity are ; there are some who, if pressed, will maintain that there is no essential difference between Christianity and heathenism. But we should all refuse to allow that Christianity had no principles merely because so many Christians do not know what they are. Again, a man may not only be holding principles and living by them without being able to explain them ; they may be holding him, influencing, actually helping to mould, his life without his having much consciousness of them. The power of

Christianity goes far deeper into the life even of a 'nominal' Christian than his expressed opinions would suggest.

The same distinction must be recognised among Churchmen. If we are pressed in argument as to the difference between ourselves and Non-Conformists, many of us would find our minds in a most confused state. We have lived our Churchmanship, and we hardly know or have ever thought which is really the centre on which the system hinges. Yet I pointed out that if we analysed any one of the whole list of peculiarities which distinguished our practice, it was always the sacramental question which furnished the explanation. We contended for Bishops to rule the Church, because with us they do rule, but when we consider the varied forms, we find that we do not really care how much they rule so long as they only ordain. We like to have an ordained minister, but on second thoughts we do not very much care who ministers so long as a priest celebrates. We are too careless about training our clergy, very largely because in the end we realise this formal sacramental presentation as their central duty. The Church system then is primarily formal and sacramental in every thread of it. We do know that, and at critical times our minds go back to it, in spite of the fact that very few continuously think of it that way, and that many of us are altogether unconscious of it.

The confused state of our minds I have confessed by the mere fact of writing this book. If we had known what we meant ourselves, it would have been quite unnecessary to disentangle it for other people. If we had known what was its living value, other people would have known it also. For my part I believe the controversy would long ago have been at an end. All

controversies take on an air of dealing with opposed views. Except in political controversies—and I am not sure that I ought to except them—the discussions are so wearisome, go on so indefinitely, because it is so hard to find out what the views are, what they rest upon and mean. Whenever we do get our views clear, we begin to learn; when we begin to learn we cease to quarrel. I hope the Non-Conformists will not be cross if I say that we are not the only people who are confused about our own meaning, though I admit they are in nothing like so dense a fog as we are. The Romans are much clearer than either of us. Here then I am in a paradox, for I have set myself this to maintain, that those who are most confused are to be guides and helpers of those who are relatively much more clear and consistent. Nevertheless, to a theological mind that is not so very impossible. If God chooses the things that are not to bring to naught them that are, perhaps He may have a use even for our muddled selves.

Why is it that the Church of England is in a state so confused? From my point of view that is a question of central importance. For those who do not share my views it is still a question of considerable scientific interest—psychologically, theologically, philosophically.

At the Reformation the Church of England began with an intention to be Catholic, to maintain and to perpetuate her ancient sacramental system, but she meant to have a reformation also. Protestant ideas were all about her; she had absorbed them; she meant to keep them, though she did not mean to give up what she had. She tried to graft the one upon the other. Non-Conformists and Romans each laid their hands on one factor and made a clear system. The Roman system was a little the more clear of the two, because it

is always easier to be clear over the definite and positive than over the relative and moving. The Church believed the two could be reconciled; she wanted, tried, to reconcile them, and reached a very poor result. Of course it is always difficult to reconcile such different principles, and for at least three well-defined reasons the Church never has reconciled them, never has got further than a compromise.

In the first place, the split with the Non-Conformists carried off all the men who could have helped the Church to realise a life of free development. On the other hand, the split with the Romans carried off those most devoted to Sacramentalism. To this I have referred before, but it is the least important of our reasons.

In the second place, the Church was forced into developing a free life of her own. Partly for political reasons that also had to take fixed forms, but this 'free' life—which springs from our human activity, whether the special religious activity of prayers or the general activity of our occupations—necessarily absorbs the human attention. Preparing a sermon takes more time and thought than preparing for a celebration. The sermon also produces the more immediately obvious results. Saying prayers, making a meditation, are an effort; receiving is merely passive. God is the thing we take for granted, as we take for granted our breathing, sleep, food; the things we have to do and our manner of doing them, our work and our morals, are always before us. The things we take for granted are the bigger and the more important, but they are the less interesting, part of our lives.

Thus it has come about in all our parishes that running about after people, attracting them, swaying

them, visiting, guilds, clubs, services, occupy the minds both of priests and people. The meaning of sacramental worship is overlaid by 'prayers' and preaching. Even the Communion becomes an occasional extra.

(3) By the withdrawing to one side or other of those who were most in earnest over them, the Church would have been in any case greatly hampered in her attempt to do justice to the two principles she was pledged to bring together. But the double schism, or split, produced a far worse result. It created a rivalry, produced a spirit of antagonism and party loyalty, which rendered it impossible to make a serious attempt at reconciling, or even understanding and realising, any principles at all.

Those who were most zealous for the sacramental system joined the Roman communion, and their influence was lost. But Rome was the determined enemy of the Church, and since Rome was sacramental, in order to be a 'loyal Churchman' it was necessary to be unsacramental. We all know the absurd lengths to which this nervous anxiety to be un-Roman has carried people. The Romans have learnt the instinct of worship. Not so long ago reverence and devoutness in Church were regarded with suspicion as being too 'like them Romans.' We are rather pleased with ourselves for having got rid of a few palpable absurdities, but the spirit prevails almost as much as ever.

It prevails also in regard to Protestantism. The Church began from formal worship, of which sacramental worship is the true expression; but as the Church shrank from that, she applied the formal principle to prayer, where it is least in place. Personally I have a tremendous love for Matins and Evensong,

but I admit that they are very difficult to follow. The Church meant them as 'daily services.' Of course if, modern-wise, we are in a tremendous hurry to explain everything 'in terms of' last week's thought before next week's system demands an entirely new set of explanations, the 'offices' will be only annoying. But these demands remind me somewhat of the amateur carpenter. His first lesson is not to lean on his saw, but to let it do its own work by its own weight. If a man will say his Psalms and read his lections through day by day for about two years, without troubling to ask exactly how much he can 'explain,' their magnificent presentation of God's reality in the immense variety of His operations, in sorrow as well as in joy, in the darkness of spiritual dryness, loneliness, failure, as well as in the sunshine of experience, in natural judgment upon the natural as well as in the comfort of religious relation, will begin to grip his mind, to mould in it the habit of a constant faith.

The Church's idea of 'daily service' is truly a magnificent thing. If, however, we take up our Matins and Evensong at rare intervals, say once a week, it is hardly possible to think of anything less suited to common use. Of course the Church never meant them to be used that way; she meant the Psalms to be read through every month, and the whole Bible every year—the New Testament twice. But whatever the Church meant—a matter about which we never enquire—Matins and Evensong are the Sunday services of the Church by habit. We are partisans of the Church; Matins and Evensong we must have. If the Psalms are difficult to follow, let us sing them—to Anglican chants. This is commonly supposed to add the somewhat indefinite quality of 'brightness'; it does not

add intelligibility, and it does make the service so much longer that any serious preaching is impossible.

The laity in increasing numbers call the service tedious and the preaching poor, but they will not have anything else. Sacramental worship is intelligible to the youngest child, if he only believes, but that is 'Roman.' Extempore prayers, properly handled, carefully adapted, would be really helpful, and would leave opportunity for serious preaching which would call out power, but that would be 'too like them Dissenters.' To combine all these, worship, free prayer, full preaching, at different times would be a fulfilling of the Church's aim, but it would be against our habits. In other words we cannot do that, simply because we do not do it.

I admit, therefore, that our practice is in utter confusion, but not because the Church has no principles. The Church has principles, and we have very true and sound instincts as to their nature and requirements, but we have never thought them out. Consequently we do not understand the meaning of the Church's system; we do not know what the different parts stand for, what are their relations or the place of each. In default of an understood meaning we are at the mercy of the customs which have grown up under the most diverse influences and circumstances, but which are now all hedged in safely by hatred of 'innovations' and threats of 'disloyalty.'

One might say therefore that the Church failed because she grasped two principles at once and that always does make a difficult situation, instead of taking one principle only which makes an easy situation. Unfortunately the Church did not recognise the difficulty of her task. Not having understood her principles

or their relation, she never really set about reconciling, or combining them; she only compromised between them. She followed each too feebly and inconsistently to get its best out of it, and yet sufficiently far to prevent her getting the best out of its fellow.

Certainly I agree with the Non-Conformists that it is utterly useless for us to ask them to come into our actual Anglican system as it is practised. They on their side will not listen to such a proposal for a moment. What presentable reasons have we for urging that they should? Why should they change their 'free' services for our morning and evening prayer—with a sermon? For the purpose for which both are used, theirs seems to me far the more suitable. If we mean no more by our sacraments than they do by theirs, why should they upset their usage to put the same thing in its place? Of course we should thus gain a unity of some sort, but the Non-Conformists would have to pay a heavy price for what can be equally well gained by toleration.

That unity of toleration, not the few but the large mass of Church people, earnestly, obstinately, rejects. Why? I admit that most of us talk somewhat lamely of a Divine foundation, the claim to which can only be made good in a warfare of historical criticism as dubious in result as it is futile. Whole libraries of controversial books have been written without our getting one step nearer a conclusion. The stakes are too high to allow either party to acknowledge defeat. Charges of obstinacy and perversity are mere brickbats, which, if they do us any damage, also supply ammunition for a return fire. If this large mass of Church people are obstinate, is it not plain that there are at the back of their minds, or in their instincts, those very principles

of a sacramental reality which it must be admitted our habitual system very feebly sets forth? We shall be doing something to clear the issue if we make it plain that it is Church *principles*, not the actual Church practice, which we are urging Non-Conformists to accept. I am going to involve myself here in a small contradiction. I will set out its two sides.

(1) I ask the Non-Conformists to *accept from us* what we have to give. It is a most unpleasant way of opening, but I ask them to be patient while I put the whole before them. For this purpose I will try to summarise here what I have urged more at length elsewhere.

If this proposal is to be met by a quasi-papal *non possumus*, by some such assertion as this: 'Our Non-Conformist system is fully complete, defective on no side,' then there is no unity possible except by surrender. We Churchmen could only enter it by giving up our belief in the necessity, nay even in the existence of the gift of a sacramental Presence, for if that Presence can be given in the way we believe, plainly a system which does not recognise that gift must be incomplete.

I am not, however, asking Non-Conformists merely to 'come in' in the sense of surrendering one set of principles for another, freedom for sacramentalism. I have urged that the two were rather correlatives, necessary to one another.

I have not asked Non-Conformity to abandon any principle or belief it possesses, except indeed the belief that it was altogether rich and in need of nothing. I know the Non-Conformists believe, as we do, in the objective reality of God, in objective and real grace. I think they are conscious, however, that this is somewhat their weaker side, which has to be maintained

with some effort. I have tried to show that the present constitution of Non-Conformity does not allow of an adequate presentation of objective religion.

Of course I am not for a moment supposing that Non-Conformists are ready to admit that. I have discussed the point at great length in my first part. I am only holding out my hands, pleading with them that this long severance cannot have been on our side over nothing, any more than on theirs, pleading that it should be thought over prayerfully, critically, earnestly, pleading that it should not be merely swept away with a set 'We are not going to look at anything.'

I ask for sympathy, because I feel it. All this is intensely difficult and painful for me to say, because I know how difficult and painful it is for others to listen to, how natural it will be for them to resent it, but I am coming now to the hardest point of all, which yet I cannot shirk. If there is any truth at all in the essential position—if, without admitting that there is, others will at least consider whether there may not be —something, this something, this sacramental basis, which Non-Conformity needs in order to make its own system really safe, really strong, really capable of developing its whole power—as I earnestly desire it should—then this basis only can be *accepted*.

The Non-Conformists can no more make a sacramental system for themselves than we can. Once more, it is the essence of a sacrament that it is a gift, and it is the essence of a gift that you must first receive it; you cannot take it. In Communion the Body of Christ is *given*. At ordination the power to consecrate is *received*. A sacramental system cannot be 'developed,' cannot be created by merely saying—that

is what we will have or do. Our doctrine of ordination, of Apostolical succession, of a *historic* episcopate, has neither meaning nor value save in this respect that it is the essential witness that that which is done is of God. My hope is then that at last, if we will be patient, if we wait, seeking the truth till God shows it to us, Non-Conformists and we may be found kneeling together to receive the same gift.

So far I have only been summarising, and what? 'A futile dream'? It may be; at present I know it seems so, yet I would ask my brothers to consider this. Is not that dream at least on the line—as nothing else is on the line—of what on general principles we find as the basis of all unity? As scientists men differ in opinions or in theories about things; as practical, men differ in their uses of things. But much as we differ in all that is our own, in the sameness of the fact, there at least is the ground of unity; in reverence for fact as such there is already some beginning of the attainment of unity.

I have personally an immense belief in the Church of England, not in spite of my damaging admissions nor in spite of her defects. 'Anglicanism is a failure.' If anybody cares to say so, I shall not dissent; at best she is a very poor success. She is a failure—or a very poor success—because she has held on steadily to two principles. I do not claim that we have shown any special wisdom in doing so. It would be absurd to suppose that a few millions odd had a higher average level of intelligence or spirituality than any other body of men, though it would be gratuitous to suppose that they were more stupid.

I do not believe, nor ask anyone to believe, in our bishops, nor in our parish clergy, nor in our laity, nor

in the E.C.U., nor for the matter of that have I any special disbelief in them. We Churchmen, leaders and people, have in times past as up to this present, done every foolish thing we could find to do, punctuated by an occasional wise thing to give variety—same as other folk. We talked of broadmindedness, toleration and the reconciling of principles. As a matter of fact we just had our own notions, and did our best to drive out everything we didn't agree with, which is also amazingly like other folk. If Anglicanism were a more thorough-going exponent and consistent exponent of Catholicism, she would be less useful. If she has still kept those vast possibilities unimpaired, it is because God meant she should, and over-ruled our stupidities. The machinery of our self-will failed us. I have no mind left to believe in men by whatever names they are called. I believe in God.

(2) Now I come to my second point very solemnly. I said I believed in the Church of England, so that I only could ask Non-Conformists to accept from her that which she holds—meaning thereby not our opinions, but her sacramental grace. A sufficiently preposterous request! I said that my second point would seem a contradiction. I do *not* ask them to accept a Church system but to make one; it exists in the Church as a possibility, as a principle; I am calling to them to accept it in order that they may make it a reality for us as well as for themselves. My sentences may be obscure and confused, but they are not half so obscure and confused as the condition into which we have all drifted. I can straighten out my sentences; who is going to unravel the tangle of our Christianity?

At least I can do my part. I believe then that the whole future of Christianity lies in the reconciling, lies

in the combining, of these two elements. Because I believe in God, I am not going to say that anything is impossible, but so far as human sight can go it does seem impossible that the English Church should carry out her system, reconcile her principles, by herself. We are all fenced in by the thorns of Church customs —which are not really Church customs at all. But—may I say it in all love?—it is Non-Conformity and Roman Catholicism which have made our system impossible to us. We live like men in a beleagured city under martial law. The necessity of keeping watch and ward, the perpetual anticipation of more bombshells, the continual firing of big guns, has created a nervous tension which finds expression in the continual dread of summary court-martials for 'spies' and 'traitors,' until the very power to go about our business like reasonable beings has passed from us. When you may be put against a wall and shot any moment—as has happened to this writer several times—even if the shooting is amazingly bad, and a foreseeing providence has only provided blank ammunition so that it would do equally well for a salute, the firing party is so dreadfully solemn that everybody is afraid to laugh and commonsense goes out of life.

Enemy dear, I have not been spying, but I have talked to some of you under a flag of truce; is it so very different on your side of the wall? Do we not all—in private—know our weakness, yet when we get on a platform or write books—as I am doing—drums beating, bugles sounding, officers waving their swords in front, sergeants shouting 'no use,' 'impossible,' 'not to be thought of,' at the laggards behind, dust rising in clouds—it is very exhilarating, but a little more like Hyde Park than the real thing on the veldt.

Does it get things on? Is it business? Would not a little quiet thinking be more helpful? If we could get peace that we might buy and sell, there are pearls of exceeding price on both sides, the value of which we must learn carefully that we may increase in eternal riches by mutual commerce.

I did not urge that Non-Conformists should come into our actual system, because my whole hope is that they will see, as an outsider may see, what the real strength of the Church system is better than we ourselves do; that thus coming in with fresh minds they will break down those hedges which I am afraid they provided us with our lamentably poor excuse for building up. Their separation—whosever fault it was—has brought to us something like ossification and death. Their reconciling would be to us life from the dead.

I am not prepared to endorse or admit the whole of those drastic criticisms I collected in the earlier part of this chapter. I do not know that my judgment would have any weight, yet for thirty years I have watched with a wondering and sorrowing attention the efforts of reformers of all kinds to induce the Anglican Communion to pay some serious heed to the possibilities around her. But the Church—abroad as well as at home, free or established—is so soaked in those twin ideals of the 'well organised diocese' and the 'well worked parish,' that, while in these directions there has been considerable progress, the width of outlook necessary for anything which cannot be brought under those ideals has nigh ceased to exist. In general, the unwillingness to use or even consider what might suggest a doubt as to the all-sufficiency of the official routine, the inability to face results which everybody knows

will not bear talking about, the readiness to gloss them over rather than admit that there are things to which the customary procedure is not adequate, the blank indifference to the most obvious opportunities which cannot be reduced to parochial or, at best, diocesan terms, the jealous suspicion of the devoted enthusiasm of her own children if it seems to move—as it must move—somewhat outside those official lines, the consequent inability to produce such enthusiasm on an adequately effective scale; all these—which any onlooker could illustrate with a score of instances one way or another within his own experience—are as incredible as, to one who loves the Church, they are heart-breaking. I am in this paragraph giving only my own personal opinion when I say that I have learnt to doubt whether any great measure of church reform can be carried through till we can bring to it from somewhere a new mind, in earnest over principles and ends, less absorbed over narrow personal and local sections, less nervously jealous over formalities.

'Herein I am getting more preposterous. I ask Non-Conformists to submit, and now it turns out I propose it because it would be helpful to us!' I have said, however, and I say it again, that it is quite impossible for either of us to accept anything or to submit to anything, except because it is true, and because through earnest and reverent consideration God has brought us to see it thus. If the Non-Conformists do accept something, it can only be because they have learnt to see in the Church elements which are not inconsistent with, but necessary to, what God has already given them.

If I have urged any other reasons, it is only as *prima facie* grounds for making such consideration. Notably

just here I have emphasised (1) that I did not want our confused state to blind them, as it has so largely blinded us, to the real essence of the Church position ; (2) that I fully realise, as I believe most Churchmen realise, that Non-Conformists could not join the Church by *mere* submission or acceptance, and neither I nor we in the least wish they should. We are looking to them in the hope that they will not only add to us what we have not got, but help us to enter into the meaning of what we have.

Certainly I think that what I propose would be an advantage to Non-Conformists—more, it would be an unspeakable gain to Non-Conformity, not only to the individuals, but to the spirit and power of the system—as well as to the Church and to her system, but I am not really thinking about either of them in this sense. I am thinking of Christianity ; I am thinking of God's honour ; I am thinking of that huge mass of the world for whom Christ died. I am wondering how it is to be won, what is the whole single Gospel of Jesus Christ by which it can be redeemed, what is the religious presentation of that Gospel as whole and single which can be set forth effectively. 'Alas,' said S. Augustine to the Donatists, 'here is our flock and here is yours, but where is the flock of Jesus Christ?' Can that be brought together by halves? Is it not abundantly plain that it never will be nor can be brought back save by a Gospel whole, intact, harmonious, the simple act witnessing to the simple fact, what happens and is done bringing before us now and here the actual truth of what did happen and was done once for all, and yet the gift received in submission passing outwards in fulness of individual life, ever so varied, spontaneous, free?

When we get up on a platform every fibre in us resents, of course it resents, the suggestion that this Gospel we have held, preached and duly argued about, is not complete. We cannot accept this, and we cannot accept that, but the world will not be redeemed by negations. When we drop our arguments and look broadly at the world, what are the facts? What is the voice of God saying in them? Is it not evident that there must be *something* on each side which we have not yet understood? When we look at God's Gospel, is it not evident that this something in the way, over which we are incessantly stumbling, must be at least somewhat of the kind I have put out, somewhat in rough measure similar to the difference of basis and development, fact and apprehension, objective and subjective, creed and thought, sacrament and prayer?

Is it not something hidden in the mystery of the Trinity, in the double sending forth, first, of the Son, given once for all in the Incarnation, offering once for all the one full, perfect and sufficient Sacrifice, and, secondly, of the Spirit working continually among all, which we have to realise as the Unity of the Godhead, Manifest and Operative?

Is not this just the pattern of the unity we have missed, and of which Christianity is still in travail? What matter our words and our arguments—mine or another's? Oh! that God would show Himself, that He would take the matter into His own hands, that He would take us into His hands, that He would fulfil in us His Will, that we might be one as He is!

O Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son of the Father, Who rulest over all things from the Creation of the World, with Whom it is to guide the hearts of men, to

Whom all judgement hath been committed because Thou art the Son of Man; judge us not according to our self-will, but as Thou didst pray, 'As Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us,' even so according to Thy Will be it done unto us.

AMEN. COME, LORD JESUS.

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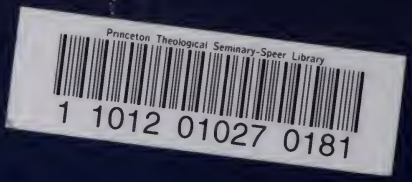
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